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DISSERTATION

**OF BALLOTS AND BULLETS: EXPLAINING CIVILIAN
CONTROL OF THE MILITARY IN TURKEY, 2002–2011**

by

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September 2014

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MILITARY IN TURKEY, 2002–2011**

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ABSTRACT

Democratic civilian control of the armed forces is an essential component to a free and open democracy. The states of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) rely on civilian control to encourage democratization efforts worldwide. This dissertation assesses how the politicians of Turkey's Justice and Development Party (AKP) managed to establish civilian control of the Turkish Armed Forces (TSK) after decades of military tutelage. Through a combination of constitutional, judicial, and military reforms, by 2011, the AKP had established control over the military. How did the AKP succeed where other political parties had failed? Using the theory of electoral competition, this dissertation demonstrates the link between elections and policy making, and how together these forces challenge military supremacy in democracies. Policies or budget decisions that infringe on military prerogatives lead to conflict with the military for control. Turkey represents a unique case study in civil-military relations that straddles research areas such as transition literature, coup prevention, democratic consolidation, and civilian control of the armed forces. Understanding how the Turkish politicians were able to consolidate the armed forces in the face of long-established military prerogatives can help explain how other states might also place the military under elected civilian control.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AKP	Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (Justice and Development Party)
ANAP	Motherland Party
CEEC	Organisation of European Economic Co-operation
CEPS	Council of Ethics for Public Service
CHP	Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (Kemalist Republican People's Party)
CUP	Committee of Union and Progress (İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti)
DISF	Defense Industry Support Fund
DP	Demokrat Parti
DSP	Demokratik Sol Partisi (Democratic Left Party)
DYP	True Path Party
ECtHR	European Court of Human Rights
SYP	Doğru Yol Partisi (True Path Party)
GDP	gross domestic product
GNAT	Turkish Grand National Assembly
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MGK	Milli Güvenlik Kurulu (National Security Council)
MHP	Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi
MÜSIAD	Müstakil Isadamları Derneği (Independent Industrialists and Businessmen's Association)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NSPD	National Security Policy Document
OYAK	Ordu Yardımlaşma Kurumu (Armed Forces Pension Fund/Armed Forces Assistance Center)
PKK	Kurdistan Worker's Party
SIPRI	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
SSDF	Savunma Sanayi Destekleme Fonu (Defence Industry Support Fund)
TSK	Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri (Turkish Armed Forces)
TSKGV	Türk Silahlı Kuvvetlerini Güçlendirme Vakfı (Turkish Armed Forces Foundation)

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I. INTRODUCTION

No protection shall be accorded to an activity contrary to Turkish national interests, the principle of the indivisibility of the existence of Turkey with its state and territory, Turkish historical and moral values or the nationalism, principles, reforms and modernism of Atatürk and that, as required by the principle of secularism, there shall be no interference whatsoever by sacred religious feelings in state affairs and politics.

—PREAMBLE to the Constitution of the Republic of Turkey, 1982
(as amended 2001)

Unlike many Western democracies whose preambles serve to delineate the rights of the citizens and the purpose of the constitution in defending these rights, the Turkish Constitution of 1982 does the opposite by declaring the rights of the state and the limitations of political action by the citizenry. Because the 1982 constitution was written under the direct supervision of the Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri (Turkish Armed Forces or TSK), historical consensus holds that the very purpose of the document was to perpetuate the tutelary nature of Turkish democracy that had evolved since multi-party elections began in 1950.¹

The relationship between the military and the government is as old as either institution and has long been a source of analysis, from Juvenal's "Quis custodiet ipsos custodies?" to Machiavelli and into the 21st century. Examples of contestation for control, however, span a wide spectrum, from the benign protest resignation by an officer to the extreme armed coup attempt to remove or replace a government. In *The Man on Horseback: The Role of the Military in Politics*, Samuel Finer identified the four primary ways the military changes governments: influence, blackmail, displacement, and supplantment.² Least intrusive of these is influence, which includes normal constitutional roles of counsel. Blackmail includes intimidation of civilian authorities, while

¹ Ergun Özbudun, *The Constitutional System of Turkey: 1876 to the Present*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 19.

² S. E. Finer and Jay Stanley, *The Man on Horseback: The Role of the Military in Politics* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 2002), 32.

displacement or supplantment includes threats against authorities, failure to defend authorities against violence, and outright violence directed at civilian authorities.³

Since 1950, the TSK has engaged in each of these activities at various times in order to maintain governments that adhered to the Kemalist standards expected by the TSK and codified in the constitutions written under the supervision of the military juntas.⁴ This adherence to Kemalist ideals can be traced back to the 1931 Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (Republican People's Party or CHP) program, and were also codified in its 1937 constitution.⁵ Combined with an ambiguous constitutional requirement that citizens remain loyal to the principles of the greatest Turkish military hero Atatürk, it is not surprising that, throughout the history of Turkish democracy, when conflict arose between the military and the elected civilian government regarding the direction of the state, the military always resolved the conflict according to their interest.⁶ Figure 1 shows the multiple military interventions, their period of influence and regime type since multi-party elections began in 1950, and demonstrate the prevalence of military influence over the political process. However, as this dissertation will demonstrate, from 2002 forward, the historical preeminence of the TSK has been successfully challenged by the governing Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (Justice and Development Party or AKP). Interestingly, the AKP has not only prevented the military from dictating the terms of the civil-military relationship in Turkey, but has also virtually reversed the traditional authority structure.

³ This graduated approach to interventions has been utilized in previous areas, more recently by José A. Olmeda, "Escape from Huntington's Labyrinth: Civil-Military Relations and Comparative Politics," in *The Routledge Handbook of Civil-Military Relations*, ed. Thomas C. Bruneau and Florina Cristiana Matei (New York: Routledge, 2012), 66.

⁴ Kemalism is the term for a style of nationalism in government with a strong military actively involved in the operation of the state and is named for the first President, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. The six pillars of Kemalism include Republicanism, populism, secularism, revolutionism, nationalism, and statism. Of these original six pillars of Kemalism (and the Kemalist CHP serving as the opposition party during the AKP decade), only republicanism, secularism, and nationalism have been mandated in each Turkish constitution. The modern TSK is directly descended from the military that was led by Kemal Atatürk and has always viewed nationalism and secularism as specific requirements of the country and reserved the right to define how these essential components of the state would be interpreted.

⁵ Gerassimos Karabelias, "The Military Institution, Atatürk's Principles, and Turkey's Sisyphean Quest for Democracy," *Middle Eastern Studies* 45, no. 1 (2009), 58.

⁶ Republic of Turkish Grand National Assembly (GNAT), "The Constitution of the Republic of Turkey," (Ankara, Turkey: Republic of Turkey, 1982). Preamble, paragraph 5.

As evidenced by the multitude of reforms enacted over the AKP decade and the mass resignations of the armed forces chiefs of staff.

Event	Period	Regime
Coup	May 1960-Oct 1961	Military Rule
"Coup by Memorandum"	Mar 1971-Apr 1973	Martial Law
Coup	Sep 1980-Nov 1982	Military Rule
Coup leader President	1982–1989	Military Tutelage
"Postmodern Coup"	1997–2002	"Feb 28th Process"

Figure 1. Periods of military regime

In July of 2011, the balance of power was visibly upended when all four of the top generals in the TSK (the service branch chiefs) resigned over a disagreement with the AKP. It involved the investigation and prosecution of military members on conspiracy charges stemming from the "Ergenekon investigation."⁷ While not the first time military officers have resigned in protest over civilian policies, the resignation of all four service chiefs represented a significant increase in civilian leverage.⁸

The Ergenekon investigation began in 2007. It explored the origins and intended uses of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)-issued fragmentation grenades found in a private residence and later linked to a domestic attack. What began as the discovery of a weapons cache of grenades and bomb-making materials has since burgeoned into a massive investigation of actual and alleged TSK coup plans extending from 1980 up until the 2007 weapons discovery. By the time former Chief of Staff General Ilker Başbuğ was arrested—on charges of establishing and leading a terrorist organization for the purpose of eliminating the Turkish Republic—over 300 people had been arrested in conjunction with Ergenekon, nearly 100 of whom were members of the media. In March 2013, the prosecution finally concluded cases that had been underway since 2008. During the

⁷ Before the Ergenekon resignations, the most recent military general to resign occurred when the Chief of General Staff resigned in 1990 over disagreement with civilian policies on the Persian Gulf War and Islamism. This singular resignation also prompted analysis of growing civilian influence, but was unpaired with any actual increase in the legal control mechanisms that this paper will discuss, and did not correlate to actual diminishment of military leverage.

⁸ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), 242.

process, the 26th commander of the TSK, as well as other general officers, spent months to years in prison.

The thorough investigation into the conspiracy and subsequent resignation of the four heads of military branches—when combined with reforms to military prerogatives in the judiciary, Milli Güvenlik Kurulu (National Security Council or MGK), and budgetary oversight—evidence growth of civilian control of the Turkish military during the AKP decade that began in 2002. The purpose of this dissertation is to answer the following question: Given the Turkish military’s historically powerful and central role in politics, how did the civilian AK Parti gain and maintain control over the armed forces from 2002 to 2011?

In this dissertation, I contend that the politicians of the AKP were able to exert civilian control over the armed forces by demonstrating widespread popular support for the party at the ballot box. The politicians then used this support to legislate reforms to the military. While civil-military relations between the AKP and the TSK are informed by a variety of theories, electoral competition and the incentive structure created by elections best explains the ability of the AKP to succeed where previous parties failed.

A. HYPOTHESIS AND CONCEPTUALIZING CIVILIAN CONTROL

From the first Turkish multiparty elections in 1946, until the 2007 national elections, the military has played a continuous role in Turkish politics and has operated independently of civilian control. As will be established in this section, while both the 1961 and 1982 constitutions identified civilian authority over the military, neither provided the necessary means to exert control. Meanwhile, both documents granted the military the authority to intervene in politics in the event of a threat to the nature of the state, as well as the right to define what constituted a threat to the state.

In the Turkish case, intervention is a logical extension of military identity. One definition of “military intervention in politics,” from Samuel Finer, is “The armed forces’ constrained substitution of their own policies and/or their persons, for those of the

recognized civilian authorities.”⁹ In Turkey, military interference runs the full spectrum, from the military’s simple public relations and educational indoctrination to full military coup d’État. This interference has been a defining aspect of Turkish politics since multi-party elections began and was also present during the Ottoman era. The Turkish military could (and did) cite constitutional law and claim that intervention was a professional responsibility and constitutional obligation.¹⁰

The focus on interventions is relevant to the historical narrative of Turkish civil-military relations because interventions demonstrate who the ultimate authority is and, therefore, who actually governs the state. Are civilians the authority, with a monopoly over military power in the territory, or is the military its own authority? As political creations, all militaries are involved at least minimally in politics, but only a few challenge civilians for actual authority of the state. General military influence is more difficult to measure than forcible displacement and, therefore, more difficult to discern a noticeable increase or decrease in influence. General influence can, however, offer a better understanding of who holds the upper hand between the military and civilians on a day-to-day basis.¹¹ The research question assesses the means by which the AKP gained and maintains control over the TSK, and the prevention of challenges to the authority of the civilians is a key indicator of who truly governs the state.

With multiple military coups, hundreds of political imprisonments under military rule, and even military executions of civilians¹² following a 1960 coup—along with innumerable instances of military pressure on political parties, the press, and the educational system—Turkish military involvement in politics established what Turks

⁹ Finer and Stanley, *Man on Horseback*, 23.

¹⁰ During non-violent (unarmed) interventions the military would cite their constitutional roles and then civilian compliance with military demands followed shortly thereafter. On both the 1960 and 1980 coups the military overthrew the government then after the fact went back and cited their constitutional role in upholding the republic. In all instances the TSK viewed military intervention as constitutionally justified military behavior.

¹¹ Peter D. Feaver, “Civil-Military Relations,” *Annual Review of Political Science* 2 (1999), 219.

¹² Following the 1960 coup, the Turkish Prime Minister, Foreign Minister, and Finance Minister were all convicted by a junta-appointed court of high treason and executed. The 1980 coup saw over 650,000 arrests and 7,000 sentenced to death.

refer to as their tutelary democracy.¹³ That is, the state sustained the trappings of democracy, such as multi-party elections and peaceful transfers of power between duly elected political parties. However, when political parties went astray from the founding principles of the republic [in the estimation of the TSK], the military was there to step in and “correct” the course of Turkish politics.¹⁴

After both the 1960 and 1980 coups, a period of military rule allowed for a constitutional rewrite and eventual return to civilian leadership under circumstances dictated by the military. Despite this “reset” of authority, in neither instance was the return to civilian authority enough to actually permit civilian control; in both cases, military tutelage was further protected in national law.¹⁵ The 1960 coup was followed by the coerced resignation of Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel in 1971 and eventually the 1980 coup. The 1980 coup was followed by the “postmodern coup” in 1997, which ousted Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan.¹⁶ Civilian authority was, throughout, merely a notion, with no significant legitimate civilian control.¹⁷ The office of the president best illustrates the depth of military entrenchment in politics. From the inception of the state in 1923 through 1989, all but one Turkish president had been chosen from the ranks of current or former military officers.¹⁸

¹³ Ahmet T. Kuru, “The Rise and Fall of Military Tutelage in Turkey: Fears of Islamism, Kurdism, and Communism,” *Insight Turkey* 14, no. 2 (2012), 38.

¹⁴ Steven A. Cook, *Ruling but Not Governing: The Military and Political Development in Egypt, Algeria, and Turkey* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), 15.

¹⁵ Ergun Özbudun, *The Constitutional System of Turkey: 1876 to the Present*, Middle East Today (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 21.

¹⁶ The 1997 coup is referred to as the “postmodern coup” because of the manner in which it occurred. The national security council presented a list of 18 demands to which the prime minister could not acquiesce without alienating his base. Simultaneous to this the military mounted a public relations campaign against the Welfare Party attempting to undermine their legitimacy.

¹⁷ Müge Aknur, “The Impact of Civil-Military Relations on Democratic Consolidation in Turkey,” in *Democratic Consolidation in Turkey: State, Political Parties, Civil Society, Civil-Military Relations, Socio-Economic Development, EU, Rise of Political Islam, and Separatist Kurdish Nationalism*, ed. Müge Aknur (Boca Raton, FL: Universal, 2012), 213.

¹⁸ While in many ways a symbolic office, the president still holds the authority to preside over the National Security Council, appoint the general staff, mobilize the military, and generally fill the role of constitutional oversight of the military.

With the elections of the AKP in 2002, the power structure began to shift. Due to constitutional guidelines on minimal popular vote thresholds for parliamentary representation by a political party, the AKP secured 363 of 550 possible parliament seats (66 percent) with only 34.3 percent of the popular vote.¹⁹ While polling had revealed that the AKP would do well, no one had envisioned the AKP having the ability to form a government without a coalition, but the widespread voter disillusionment with establishment parties led to support for the new AK Party.²⁰

Since the 2002 election, the AKP had maintained a steady erosion of military prerogatives. Removing the military from educational oversight, changes to the laws allowing military trials for civilians, and a reduction in the frequency of MGK meetings were all areas of AKP success in reducing military prerogatives from 2002 to 2004.²¹ Despite these reforms, however, nothing had prepared the country for the unprecedented resignations of all four top military officers of the TSK, the institution that had served as kingmaker since the 1923 foundation of the Republic.

It is one thing for a military to accept minor reform; it is another thing entirely to have no courses of action other than but to resign over as critical an issue as the prosecution of military officers for conspiracy against the state. Experience had shown that TSK leadership simply did not resign in the face of civilian challenge. Yet in July 2011, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan calmly accepted the resignations while President Abdullah Gül moved to replace the Chiefs of Staff with generals more amenable to the AKP rule.

What then explains this shift in relative power during the 2002–2011 period? As a crucial preliminary step, we must first ask, what constitutes civilian control of the military? How is that control enforced and maintained? Universal among democracies is

¹⁹ A political party in 2002 needed 10 percent of the popular vote in order to receive representation in parliament; only the AKP and the Kemalist CHP (Republican People's Party) cleared that threshold. A full 45 percent of the popular vote went unrepresented in parliament.

²⁰ Evangelia Axiarlis, *Political Islam and the Secular State in Turkey: Democracy, Reform and the Justice and Development Party* (New York, NY: I.B. Tauris, 2014), 251.

²¹ William Hale and Ergun Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism in Turkey: The Case of the AKP* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 88.

the notion that the displacement of elected civilian officials by the armed forces demonstrates a lack of civilian control of the armed forces by overriding what Feaver terms the democratic imperative.²² Though the coup d'état conjures images of tanks surrounding capitol buildings, as Finer pointed out, such measures are not always necessary for the military to displace civilian leadership. If we accept the notion that a military coup is “a direct action which changes the government in power, not just its policies,”²³ where “the aim is to detach the permanent employees of the state from political leadership,”²⁴ then the TSK has succeeded in four such actions. In 1960 and 1980, the military forcibly displaced civilian leadership and assumed governance of the country. In 1971 and 1997, however, the civilian leadership was merely coerced into resignation under threat of an actual coup.

The presence of civilian control can be measured only in degrees, as a lack of a coup is no more an indication of civilian control than elections are evidence of open democracy.²⁵ Recognizing that civilian control is “more a *set of relationships* than an individual *event*,”²⁶ Claude Welch asserted that one way of measuring the extent of civilian control is to assess the ability of the government to alter the roles and responsibilities of the armed forces.²⁷ By linking control to changing military roles and responsibilities, we also can address the question of how control is enforced and sustained. Thomas-Durrell Young lists common control mechanisms over the armed forces, including limits on the military mission, budget, and the military.²⁸ From 2002 to

²² Peter D. Feaver, *Armed Servants: Agency, Oversight, and Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 6.

²³ Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1968), 217.

²⁴ Edward Luttwak, *Coup D'etat, a Practical Handbook* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979), 20.

²⁵ Aurel Croissant et al., “Beyond the Fallacy of Coup-Ism: Conceptualizing Civilian Control of the Military in Emerging Democracies,” *Democratization* 17, no. 5 (January 2010), 954.

²⁶ Claude E. Welch, *Civilian Control of the Military: Theory and Cases from Developing Countries* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1976), 1.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 317.

²⁸ Thomas-Durrell Young, “Military Professionalism in a Democracy,” in *Who Guards the Guardians and How? Democratic Civil-Military Relations*, ed. Thomas C. Bruneau and Scott D. Tollefson (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2006), 26.

2011, the AKP successfully change each of these factors in the face of military challenges. Young further identifies formal control mechanisms such as constitutional and legal limitations, military culture, societal norms, and a free press.²⁹ On each of these issues, the AKP was also able to alter the military functions and create conditions more favorable to civilian rather than military oversight. Thus, through these reforms, the AKP effectively changed the set of relationships, as described by Welch, to favor civilian politicians over the armed forces. Identifying and explaining how these reforms take place simultaneously demonstrates increasing control and describes the mechanisms to sustain and enforce that control. Having identified what control looks like, the question yet unanswered is: How did the civilians get control?

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

I find in existence a new and heretofore unknown and dangerous concept that the members of our armed forces owe primary allegiance or loyalty to those who temporarily exercise the authority of the Executive Branch of Government rather than to the country and its Constitution which they are sworn to defend. No proposition could be more dangerous.

—General Douglas MacArthur, 1952

Twentieth century analysis of civil-military relations began with Samuel Huntington's *The Soldier and the State* in 1957, wherein Huntington claims that the forces influencing the nature of a military include the threat to the security of society and the "social forces, ideologies, and institutions dominant within the society." Huntington posited that the relationship between the military and society is a contentious balancing of the security of the state with the conventions of society.³⁰

The linchpin for Huntington's theory is military professionalism. For Huntington, the military professional was the one who obeyed civilian masters and a military that did not obey was by definition unprofessional.³¹ A more professional military meant a more

²⁹ Ibid., 28.

³⁰ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1985), 2.

³¹ Ibid., 74.

loyal military that was accepting of civilian control. Effective civilian control was most likely to persist when military professionalism was maximized, and this maximization was most likely to occur when the level of coercive power that the military officer corps wielded over civilian groups was minimal.³²

In May 1960, the TSK was the most well trained, well equipped, and experienced institution in Turkey. The military was battle hardened and worldly from experience in the Korean War, familiar with the structure of the NATO alliance, and on the front lines of the Cold War. By all indications, the Turkish military was a professional war-fighting institution serving a democratically elected government. Yet on the 27th of May (almost exactly a decade after multi-party elections began), citing authoritarianism by the Menderes government, mid-level officers executed a coup against the state. Only by accepting a tautological understanding of the term “professional” could one argue that mid-level officers with the ability to execute a coup without alerting general officers could one call said officers unprofessional.

Simultaneous to the 1960 coup, Morris Janowitz published an alternate theory of civilian control in *The Professional Soldier*. Janowitz’s theory has become known as the Civic-Republican Theory or “Convergence” for some scholars and posits that, as in ancient Rome, the nature of the military should tend towards civic service and the citizen soldier as representative of society rather than exclusive of society.³³ To Janowitz the military officer desired to support the civilian authorities because to do so was to serve the republic.³⁴ Importantly, this civic virtue did not preclude the possibility that the military could become more political in nature and wield extensive power over government policy.³⁵

Civic-Republicanism would posit that military intervention in government would be the result of a lack of republican values on the part of the membership of the armed

³² Ibid., 81.

³³ Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait* (Ann Arbor, MI: Free Press, 1964), 235.

³⁴ Zoltan Barany, *The Soldier and the Changing State: Building Democratic Armies in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012), 22.

³⁵ Janowitz, *Professional Soldier*, 234.

forces. If we hold that loyalty to the Republic means loyalty to the elected government at all costs, then the TSK was most certainly lacking in republican virtue. If one, however, considers loyalty to the state over that of the government as has the TSK throughout modern Turkish history (see chapter two) then the TSK historically has possessed a strong republican spirit (in the TSK's own understanding of the notion).

Both Professionalism and Civic-Republicanism would similarly look askance at the 1971 military intervention, termed the “coup by memorandum,” and assert that a lack of professionalism or a breakdown in civic values would explain the intervention. The manner in which the intervention played out, however, indicates that the TSK considered their actions both professional and of the highest republican spirit to protect the Republic. The memorandum sent to the president, signed by the three heads of the armed services, demanded that “an understanding above party politics” be achieved, else the military “use its legal rights and seize power directly to accomplish its duty of protecting and *supervising* the Turkish republic.”³⁶ (Emphasis added)

Rather than focusing on internal mores, Michael Desch advocates a structural theory of civil-military relations that assumes the internal and external threat environment places pressure on the military, civilians, and institutions and that this pressure leads to conflict. Drawing heavily from Kenneth Waltz's work and, more broadly, international relations theory, Desch hypothesized that the most stable civil-military relations would be those that exist in a high external threat and low internal threat environment due in part to a “rally around the flag” effect.³⁷ However, the internal and external threat conditions necessary to Desch's structural theory do not change from 2002 to 2006 in a fashion that would predict a more stable relationship.

As Chapter II discusses in depth, Turkey, between 2002 and 2006, experienced a decrease in internal security following the U.S. invasion of Iraq (which failed to receive parliamentary for Turkish support by a narrow margin due to lack of voter support),

³⁶ Nasser Momayezi, “Civil-Military Relations in Turkey,” *International Journal on World Peace* 15, no. 3 (1998), 8.

³⁷ Michael C. Desch, *Civilian Control of the Military: The Changing Security Environment* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press), 14.

conditions that would predict greater, not less, military interference.³⁸ Similarly, 9/11 represented an internal threat to the Turkey and a potential target for terrorism like other regional allies, such as Jordan, who supported the coalition forces. An Islamic political party had recently won election, and the Islamist prime minister had recently taken office; structurally, Turkey in 2002 looked very similar to Turkey in 1997. Because control over the armed forces did change, and the threat levels of structural theory did not change in the direction that would predict increased military subservience, structural theory cannot accurately answer the research question.

Publishing just after the 2002 election of the AKP, Peter Feaver proposed transposing principal-agent theory from economics (redubbed agency theory by Feaver) to explain the power relationship between civilians and the military. Specifically, Feaver argues that the military is the agent of the civilian principal, at all times and in all instances subject to the oversight, direction, and objectives of the civilian government, which is the ultimate arbiter of who determines acceptable risks and which conflicts have priority.³⁹ Feaver suggests that the challenge to the civilian principal is how to effectively monitor the actions of the military and guarantee that the agent does not shirk the responsibilities placed upon it by government, the principal.⁴⁰

Also in 2002 newly minted Prime Minister Erdogan, asserted that inherent weaknesses of political institutions were largely responsible for lack of civilian control over the military when observing “the military intervened in politics only when there was a political vacuum: the military played a somewhat expanded role because the political will was weak.”⁴¹ For Peter Feaver, the strength of the political will should not be a factor for military control. Democracy means the civilians always have the right to control, if not the means to enforce control, regardless of their capacity or expertise. In Feaver’s estimation, this is the essence of democratic theory.

³⁸ Andrew Mango, *Turkey and the War on Terror: For Forty Years We Fought Alone* (London: Routledge, 2005), 47.

³⁹ Peter D. Feaver, “The Right to Be Right: Civil-Military Relations and the Iraq Surge Decision,” *International Security* 35, no. 4 (2011), 97.

⁴⁰ Feaver, *Armed Servants*, 59.

⁴¹ Hale and Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism*, 81.

Feaver expects a consolidated democracy with firm civilian control of the military wherein the military accepts the notion that the civilians have “the right to be wrong.”⁴² The agency focus on the United States, with an “exceptionally high level of civilian control of military missions” makes the shirking versus working concept difficult to transfer to countries where the militaries do not necessarily embrace civilian oversight in all matters.⁴³ While principle-agent relations can exist anywhere asymmetric relations occur, not all militaries accept that they are an agent of the politicians, and measuring their lack of adherence to a construct they reject outright does not help us explain how the AKP gained control.

Between each of the aforementioned theories is a shared view that militaries should be separate from politics. Contrary to these separation theories is Rebecca Schiff’s theory of concordance, which considers the politicians, military, and public as equal participants in the political process.⁴⁴ Schiff asserts that the “specific type of civil-military relationship is less important than the ability of the three partners to agree upon four indicators: social composition of the officer corps, political decision-making process, recruitment method, and military style.”⁴⁵ If the three actors agree on one or more of these aspects, then concordance theory predicts that the military will not overthrow the government.⁴⁶

Schiff’s concordance theory is a substantial departure from early civil-military theory, because it presents the notion that the “specific type of civil-military relationship adopted is less important than the ability of the three partners to agree upon four indicators: social composition of the officer corps, political decision-making process, recruitment method, and military style.”⁴⁷ While useful for explaining why militaries

⁴² Feaver, “Civil-Military Relations,” 216.

⁴³ Maiah Jaskoski, “Civilian Control of the Armed Forces in Democratic Latin America: Military Prerogatives, Contestation, and Mission Performance in Peru,” *Armed Forces & Society* 38, no. 1 (January 2012), 72.

⁴⁴ Rebecca L. Schiff, *The Military and Domestic Politics: A Concordance Theory of Civil-Military Relations* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 32.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 33.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

choose not to execute a coup, concordance does not purport to explain increases in civilian control. Furthermore, like agency theory, concordance effectively recuses itself from explaining the shift in Turkish civil-military relations by limiting explanatory power, in this case, to coup prevention. While military coups clearly breach civilian control, the lack of a coup is not itself indicative of civilian control.

However, concordance does give rise to a Turkish specific hypothesis that should be addressed presently based on the popularity of EU accession during the first AKP government. The question that warrants addressing is: Was the European Union a necessary precondition for the civilian reforms from 2002 to 2006? EU accession began long before the AKP elections, and the coalition that preceded the AKP passed multiple harmonization packages of their own, none of which helped the coalition curtail military autonomy or prolong their own political life. Indeed harmonization packages passed full year before the 2002 elections that brought the AKP to power legislated 34 constitutional changes, yet the coalition was still turned out of office by an electorate angry at corruption, a failed economy, and poor leadership. EU accession was not enough to drive the rise of the AKP or the reform of the military.

If EU accession were a necessary component for increasing civilian control over the armed forces, then one would expect political parties in Turkey to run for election touting their commitment to EU accession. The AKP, however, largely avoided addressing their EU interests until after winning the 2002 election and only began to tout membership when the EU could provide cover for reforms.⁴⁸ After the 2002 election, the AKP pursued the same policy initiatives that they ran on: fighting corruption, expanding civil society, and improving the economy. These successful policy initiatives led to the even larger electoral success of the 2004 local elections. After this local election, one sees the significant reform efforts directed at reducing the influence of the military. Eurobarometer surveys from the 2004 elections show a considerable gap between

⁴⁸ Luigi Narbone and Nathalie Tocci, "Running around in Circles the Cyclical Relationship between Turkey and the European Union," in *Turkey's Road to European Union Membership: National Identity and Political Change*, ed. Susannah Verney and Kostas Ifantis (New York: Routledge, 2009), 27.

Turkish respondents claiming a “European” identity and that of the rest of Europe.⁴⁹ Similarly Turks expressed greater pride in their national identity than any other European country.⁵⁰ For Turks, EU accession was always about opportunity not identity. As electoral competition predicts, the AKP used incentives to increase their political support, and this support led to the ability to challenge the other significant political actor: the Turkish Armed Forces. While EU pressure demonstrated a strong catalyst effect, the absence of the catalyst would not render the model unsuccessful, but merely made challenging the military that much easier for the politicians.

As 2006 ended, Turkish political relationships were rapidly changing. The somewhat cordial relationship between the AKP and the CHP in the face of economic recovery and potential EU accession had begun to deteriorate as the economy had improved and relationships with the EU began to decline. As the tone of EU accessions began to move from how Turkey would implement the full *acquis communautaire* to internal EU debates among member states as to whether or not Turkey was even properly European, the demand among Turkish citizens for EU membership began to wane. At the same time as degenerating support for EU accession however military reform was accelerating.

Alongside these civil-military relations theories, the field of democratization contributed extensive research on how successful democratization can be predicted based on who-civilians or the outgoing military-controls the transition. This literature, initiated by Philippe Schmitter and refined by authors such as Felipe Agüero and Craig Arceneaux, holds that the balance of power during the transition determines whether democracy will take hold and grow, independent of military influence, or whether the military will remain a dominant force in government even after the transition.⁵¹ These “modes of transition” frameworks explain different starting points in civil-military

⁴⁹ European Commission, *Eurobarometer 62: Public Opinion in the European Union* (European Commission, 2004), 2

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 3

⁵¹ Craig L. Arceneaux, *Bounded Missions: Military Regimes and Democratization in the Southern Cone and Brazil* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), 14.

relations by assessing who controlled the transition, what forces led to the change in control, and what prerogatives were left in place by the exiting regime.⁵²

A military-dominated transition will leave an empowered military, while a civilian-controlled transition will result in a military subordinate to the military.⁵³ The mode of transition can be used to assess both military and non-military regime transitions, but for the purposes herein shall refer to the transition from Turkish military control or influence to civilian control.⁵⁴ From 1961 to 1983, the military returned control to elected civilians after an intervention on three occasions.

Similar to the aforementioned civil-military relations theories, the transition explanation is unable to explain the Turkish experience because nothing occurs after any of the military transitions (apart from the election of the AKP) that would explain the shift in control from military to civilian. In four instances, the TSK has effected a change in political leadership of the state, two by coups and two by coerced resignations of the prime minister. In each coup, the military dictated the terms of the transition from junta to elections. Both civilian resignations occurred when prime ministers saw that continued leadership was impossible with the threat of military coup overhead. And yet, five years after the 1997 post-modern coup, and not following any of the previous transitions, the AKP proved able to confront the military on key issues. This research applies a different theory of civil-military relations, Wendy Hunter's theory of electoral competition, which is designed to provide an explanation of how elected leaders can overcome the advantages that a military establishes for itself during a period of transition.⁵⁵

⁵² Wendy Hunter, "Continuity of Change? Civil-Military Relations in Democratic Argentina, Chile, and Peru," *Political Science Quarterly* 112, no. 3 (1997), 455.

⁵³ Felipe Agüero, "Institutions, Transitions, and Bargaining: Civilians and the Military in Shaping Post-Authoritarian Regimes," in *Civil-Military Relations in Latin America: New Analytical Perspectives*, ed. David Pion-Berlin (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 197.

⁵⁴ Philippe C. Schmitter, "The Consolidation of Political Democracies: Processes, Rhythms, Sequences and Types," in *Transitions to Democracy: Comparative Perspectives from Southern Europe, Latin America, and Eastern Europe*, ed. Geoffrey Pridham (Hanover, NH: Dartmouth, 1995), 356.

⁵⁵ While this dissertation will refer mainly to the book *Eroding Military Influence in Brazil: Politicians Against Soldiers*, the beginnings of Hunter's electoral competition came first in Third World Quarterly in 1994, then as a complete theory in the Comparative Politics article *Politicians against Soldiers: Contesting the Military in Postauthorization Brazil*. The book cited in this line merely represents the final evolution of her theory of electoral dynamics.

According to Hunter, elected politicians can overcome the institutional military advantages, such as those enjoyed by the TSK following transfer to civilian authority in 1983, by leveraging two incentive types that democracy and electoral politics offers politicians: particularistic and programmatic.⁵⁶ Particularistic incentives encourage the use of resources to build and maintain patronage networks that reinforce the standing and support of the politician. Programmatic incentives include the credit given to politicians for their successful policy initiatives. Hunter postulates two basic categories to controlling the military: those that attempt to monitor and exclude the military from politics, termed “military centered” (push method/the stick) and those that are intended to encourage the military to become more apolitical of their own volition, termed “civilian centered” (pull method/the carrot).⁵⁷

Electoral competition rests on the premise that politicians are interested primarily in “their own political survival,” as Hunter puts it—that is, winning elections, remaining in office, and increasing their political power.⁵⁸ The theory begins with a clear assumption—that politicians will seek their own political survival—and uses this assumption to explain the shift in control between the civilians and the military.⁵⁹ In *Eroding Military Influence in Brazil: Politicians Against Soldiers*, Hunter makes the argument that the legitimacy granted by electoral success, along with the competition between parties and politicians for votes, inevitably sets the stage for civil-military conflict. This impending conflict then forces civilians to adopt measures inhibiting the influence of the military.⁶⁰ Furthermore, while the military may enjoy institutional advantages conveyed by the nature of the democratic transition, the military’s ability to employ this force against the civilians is contextual, and is therefore restricted.

⁵⁶ Hunter, *Eroding Military Influence*, 9.

⁵⁷ Wendy Hunter, “Contradictions of Civilian Control: Argentina, Brazil, and Chile in the 1990’s,” *Third World Quarterly* 15, no. 4 (1994), 634.

⁵⁸ Wendy Hunter, “Reason, Culture, or Structure?: Assessing Civil-Military Dynamics in Brazil,” in *Civil-Military Relations in Latin America: New Analytical Perspectives*, ed. David Pion-Berlin (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 42.

⁵⁹ Michael Coppedge, *Democratization and Research Methods* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 159.

⁶⁰ Hunter, *Eroding Military Influence*, 13.

Conditions such as public support, internal cohesiveness, international pressure, and the unity of the politicians create the restrictions.⁶¹

Unlike the previously dismissed theories, something in electoral competition does change that explains the shift in control; consecutive elections took place outside military interference wherein a political party was reelected. As the research will demonstrate, sources of influence such as European Union accession acted to mitigate military interference long enough to allow for consecutive elections, but it is this electoral success that explains the ability of the AKP to challenge the TSK over the tutelary state, where previous politicians and political parties were unable to do so. Hypothesis #1 predicts that electoral competition can explain this increase in civilian control in Turkey.

Hypotheses #1 (Electoral Competition): The AKP was able to exert control over the TSK from 2002 to 2011 through repeated electoral and policy successes that enabled emboldened AKP challenges of TSK prerogatives.

After winning the 2002 election, the AKP leveraged the particularistic and programmatic incentives described by electoral competition to increase voter support in future elections. Repeated electoral success translated into increased civilian control of the armed forces by providing the AKP the necessary defense against military interference: significant and ever-increasing voter support. How the AKP and Prime Minister Erdoğan remained in office long enough to win repeated elections when previous political parties or prime ministers were routinely banned, forced out by the military, or had coalitional governments fall apart (and thereby preventing the repeated electoral success critical for electoral competition) is an important question, and is addressed in Chapter III.⁶²

⁶¹ Ibid., 20.

⁶² Since the transition to civilian control following the 1960 coup, there have been sixteen different governments and prime ministers. Of these, only Erdoğan has served more than three consecutive years (or more than a single election cycle) and one of which (Süleyman Demirel) was removed from office by the military on two separate occasions (1971 and 1980).

C. METHODOLOGY

In politics, the belief that certain facts are unalterable or certain trends irresistible commonly reflects a lack of desire or lack of interest to change or resist them.

—English historian E. H. Carr

This dissertation is a focused analysis on the increase in civilian control over the armed forces in Turkey under the AKP from 2002 to 2011. Hypothesis #1 describes how electoral competition could adequately explain this increase in control, through a process of elections, policy making, and military reform. The year 2002 is treated as a break from the previous 52 years of Turkish democracy wherein, prior to 2002, the military exerted control over civilians and, since 2002, the civilians have increasingly established first formal then actual control over the military. In order to effectively argue that an electoral competition is causal and not merely correlated to changes in control, there must be demonstrable evidence that the power relationship changed—that a previous behavior, norm, privilege, etc., was altered in some way that can be attributable to the influence of electoral competition.

In this dissertation, both objective and subjective evidence is considered as evidence of change. Subjective evidence of changing control comes primarily in the forms of public pronouncements and/or communications by either the military or the elected politicians. These indicators are subjective in that they reflect potential “spin” by public figures making public statements.⁶³

Objective evidence in support of a hypothesis comes in several forms. The first objective source includes reports, findings, and studies by international institutions or organizations on Turkish civil-military relations. Reports such as the annual European

⁶³ Much of the material on Turkish civil-military relations is external to the TSK itself. While the TSK has historically made their desires known on Turkish government and given explanation after intervention in politics for their reasons, these explanations stand apart from direct access to Turkish military records/archives. Original source material from the TSK is inaccessible and/or non-existent. In many instances, the best one can do is take the TSK public pronouncements on their own and compare these against the historical record and insights from Turkish authors.

Commission Regular Reports provide analysis of Turkish progress towards achieving the Copenhagen Criteria for EU Accession by assessing evidence of military involvement in politics. As public products of various international organizations, documents do not require or allow a researcher to interpret conditions in Turkey; they have already done the interpretation in light of specific E.U. measures.

The second objective evidence of changing control is the cumulative results of investigations, trials, referendums, etc., that demonstrate which entity is winning the struggle for control, the politicians or the military. The final and most important objective evidence of control are changes to the Turkish legal structure such as the laws and ministerial positions that redefine or restrict the authority of the military or, in the words of Serra: “redefine the tasks and nature of the armed forces.”⁶⁴ These last sources of evidence provide the tangible changes in the power relationships, as Welch predicted would indicate increasing civilian control. In addition trials, regulations, and constitutional amendments also directly impact the prerogatives by redefining the limits of TSK authority.

For Hypothesis #1 the critical component of establishing control over the armed forces is repeated successful elections. Assessing election results in the 2002 parliamentary, 2004 local, 2007 parliamentary (moved forward by the AKP), 2007 constitutional referendum, 2009 local, and 2010 constitutional referendum provides ample material to establish whether electoral competition contributed to the ability of the AKP to establish and maintain control over the TSK. If Hypothesis #1 were accurate, we would expect that with each successive election wherein the AKP remained in power (or achieved desired policy results such as a successful constitutional referendum) the party’s leverage over the military would grow. Growing control of the military can be demonstrated by analyzing military prerogatives and which party “wins” contestations of power such as trials and investigations.

A possible challenge to Hypothesis #1 is why electoral competition did not take root sooner. The length between the removals of elected civilian leaders from power

⁶⁴ ar c Serra, *The Military Transition: Democratic Reform of the Armed Forces*, trans. Peter R. Bush (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 61.

essentially precluded a sample of unimpeded elections that would allow electoral competition to take place. Periods of 10, 11, 9, and 14 years between 1983 and 1997 without consistent, reliable elections means the theory could not be effectively assessed. From 1983 to 1997, most governments required coalitions between parties, no government was in office long enough to effect its own five-year economic plan, and in some cases citizens were quite literally discouraged by the military for voting for a particular political party.⁶⁵ What differed from 1983 to 1997 electorally, which could explain why electoral competition couldn't take place during previous windows was the magnitude of the AKP success, the pure majority of parliamentary seats won in 2002 and allowed the AKP to act unilaterally in parliament. This majority also helps explain how Electoral Competition could "jumpstart" reforms in 2002.

In summation: If Hypothesis #1 is accurate, it will explain both the initial period of civilian control of the TSK from 2002 to 2006 and the recurring civilian control of the military from 2006 to 2011. According to this hypothesis, electoral competition created the incentive structure and ability for the AKP to assert increasing control over the Turkish Armed Forces. This increase in control is demonstrable and measureable by the number of changes to the military role and responsibilities that the AKP enacted. The resignation of all four service chiefs in protest over coup investigations demonstrated the totality of AKP control over the military, achieved in just under a decade in government.

D. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DISSERTATION AND OVERVIEW OF ANALYSIS

The field of civil-military relations has no shortage of extensive case studies, analysis, theory construction, and prescriptive formulas intended to demystify the complex relationships between governments and the armed forces charged with defending them. Some works, such as Huntington's, focuses on the general aspects of armed forces across societies, while others on the specifics of individual states and their unique historical conditions. A preponderance of the latter has focused on the states of southern Europe and Latin America with the Philippines or Egypt or Turkey occasionally

⁶⁵ Banu Eligür, *The Mobilization of Political Islam in Turkey* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 120.

added according to the interests of the researcher. Of these, Turkey represents an important case of civil-military relations precisely because Turkey represents so many subsets within the civil-military relations field.

This dissertation seeks to enhance the field of civil-military relations by detailing the process used in Turkey to gain control of a historically and institutionally powerful military by civilian politicians. The ability to explain a complex and boundary case such as Turkey adds value to the field by demonstrating the efficacy of electoral competition against a complex and modern civil-military relations case. The boundary cases that truly represent challenging civil-military relations are those case studies that theories should have to address if they are to provide true utility. Additionally, boundary cases such as Turkey are likely to overlap and have value across subsets. Turkey, for example, would provide a useful case for comparative studies interested in civil-military relations in alliances. What influence has the NATO alliance had on Turkish civil-military relations? Turkish membership in NATO exceeds that of notables Spain and Germany and coexisted in the alliance while preceding state Portugal struggled with authoritarianism and neighboring Greece withdrew from the alliance due to the Cyprus conflict.

Similarly, those scholars interested in studies on the transition between authoritarianism and democracy would find Turkey useful as a unique case to experience a multitude of transitions, each of which was different and represented another subset. The foundation of the Republic of Turkey in 1923 provides ample material for studying transition to democracy after external conflict. The 1960 coup fits transitions to democracy after violent military coup and junta (including political executions), while the 1980 coup provides a classic study in a military preparing the way for future interventions while willingly returning control (the willing return of control to civilians itself is an additional subset). The diversity between the TSK's four successful efforts to change the state's political leadership typically requires several states, and the ability to assess varied breakdowns in a single country represents a unique opportunity.

While Turkish civil-military relations can be considered a somewhat moving target given that the military has shown a propensity towards intervention during periods of both domestic stability and instability, a decade of uninterrupted electoral participation

and governance under one political party provides an ideal opportunity to assess how well electoral competition transfers cases. Turkey matters precisely because the target is moving, and moving fast. Not merely a study in history, Turkish civil-military relations is also a study in the present evolution of the field. As a subset of democratization, explaining the civil-military relations in complex cases such as Turkey also feeds the main discipline and advances research that focuses on other aspects of democratization such as party politics, political economy, and civil society.

Any state with a strong military and suboptimal civilian control will find value in knowing how a state in similar circumstances could consolidate control of the military in such a short window of time, and whether that consolidation is replicable. While the specifics of each case will always differ, a theory with strong utility should be able to speak to each of these differences with some degree of accuracy. South Korea, Pakistan, and Egypt are just a few such states whose civil-military dynamics look closer to those of Turkey than to those of the United States or other well-consolidated democracies. To these states, the vagaries of which U.S. military general published an opinion piece that differs from the official executive branch policy is likely less important than understanding how a group of politicians could reform a military a mere five years after a successful military intervention banned a political party and imprisoned the current prime minister.

Following this introduction, Chapter II sets the stage for the research and analysis by explaining the origins and evolution of Turkish civil-military relations from the foundation of the Republic in 1923 to the 2002 reforms. From 1923 to 1950, single-party politics and the legacy of Atatürk dominated Turkish government. The period from 1950 to 1961 saw the introduction of multi-party elections and factionalism, a direct affront to the military vision of society. From 1961 to 1982, Turkish politics was defined by changes to the powers of the military such as the Armed Forces Internal Service Law and National Security Council Law. These laws increased the ability of the military to legally interfere in domestic politics. The period from 1982 to 2002 saw the TSK solidify the prerogatives earned during the previous decades and establish themselves as the “guardians” of the republic in the political and martial sense. Finally, explanation of the

AKP reforms of the TSK, from 2002 forward, sets the stage for analysis of how these reforms were successfully pursued.

The rest of this dissertation proceeds in a straightforward manner with Chapter III describing the use of programmatic and particularistic incentives of electoral competition to establish formal control over the TSK from 2002 to 2006. Chapter IV then explains the increase in civilian control during a period of open contestation with the TSK from 2007 to 2011, and the mass resignations of the chiefs of staff. Lastly, Chapter V offers a conclusion of the performance of Hypothesis #1 and electoral competition in explaining the growth in civilian control of the armed forces in Turkey during the AKP decade from 2002 to 2011, policy implications of this research, and identifies future research opportunities base of the findings herein.

II. THE EVOLUTION OF TURKISH CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS

In order to assess the shift in control of politics in Turkey under the AKP, one must first understand how the foundations of the tutelage state came to be. To appreciate the extent of the entrenched military power and prerogatives that the AKP has overcome through electoral competition, one must delineate the myriad rules, regulations, and laws that have enabled the military to act as political arbiter since the inception of the Republic in 1923. The purpose of this chapter then is twofold: first, to explain why the military was able to perpetuate the tutelary state for so long and, second, to set the stage for how, from 2002 forward, electoral competition would prove accurate in predicting and explaining increased civilian control over the Turkish military.

Successful reforms that began in 2002 are most accurately analyzed against the backdrop of over a century of military involvement in Turkish politics. Understanding what methods of intervention were utilized and the legal justifications for intervention, as well as the conditions that contribute to the ability of the military to intervene, helps clarify why, of the various models of civil-military relations discussed in the introduction, only electoral competition can explain the Turkish case. As Craig Arceneaux observed, “one cannot understand transition control without a detailed examination of the period of military rule that preceded it.”⁶⁶

Turkey presents several different periods of military rule that preceded transitions, some democratic, others to back to the Ottoman Sultanate, but each essential to the evolution of Turkish civil-military relations. The periods, which have created the unique conditions of modern Turkish civil-military relations, include the Ottoman era up to 1922, the single party period of 1923–1950, the introduction of multi-party elections from 1950 to 1960, the rise of military tutelage from 1961 to 1982, and the tutelary state from 1982 to 2002.

⁶⁶ Arceneaux, *Bounded Missions*, 4.

From the 19th century forward, the Ottoman military proved a significant driver of political change when the sultanate tended towards greater authoritarianism.⁶⁷ Consideration of the period before the 1919 War of Independence and the creation of modern Turkey will illustrate the longstanding tendency of the armed forces to intervene in politics when the Turkish government did not perform according to military expectations.⁶⁸ During the single-party period, the military lay dormant while former military leaders such as Mustafa Kemal and İsmet Pasha (later İnönü) led the creation of a republic purposefully modeled on those of Western Europe.

After World War II, Cold War politics and economic growth demanded a shift in Turkish politics to meet these challenges and, in 1950, multi-party elections began. After the first modern Turkish coup in 1960, the military introduced a new constitution that would allow for greater political participation. This constitution established the conditions that would lead to the rise of modern military tutelage and subsequent interventions. The period of 1980–2002 saw the military consolidate its role as the arbiter of Turkish politics, complete with another constitution clearly establishing the parameters of the tutelage state.

A. THE MILITARY, THE STATE, CONTROL, AND INTERVENTION

Understanding the evolution of Turkish civil-military relations begins with knowledge of the historical relationship between the Turkish armed forces and the Turkish (previously Ottoman) government. The relationship between the government and the military in Turkey is historically rooted in a narrative of control and intervention, and of which faction—the military or the governing regime—can effectively exert control over the other. Detailing the historical context that precedes modern Turkey sets the stage for analysis of how the civilians have finally found the means to exert lasting control over the military.

⁶⁷ David Capezza, “Turkey’s Military Is a Catalyst for Reform,” *The Middle East Quarterly* 16, no. 3 (2009), 2.

⁶⁸ Stanford J. Shaw, “The Origins of Ottoman Military Reform: The Nizam-I Cedid Army of Sultan Selim III,” *The Journal of Modern History* 37, no. 3 (1965), 291.

The manner in which a military relates to the government that fields and funds said military is unique across countries. In some nations, the military oversees the government; in others it protects the state and, in many, it represents the state in international institutions. In all cases the military remains a component of the state. The complex relationship between the Turkish military and Turkish governments is the result of a multitude of laws, institutions, and standards that have historically granted the military a high degree of latitude to interfere in the government of the state. Samuel Finer asserts that militaries are purposive instruments, rationally conceived to accomplish objectives such as defense, war, or the assistance of civil powers.⁶⁹ These militaries are conceived by states, a centralized authority with a monopoly of military power over a given territory.⁷⁰

What happens in those instances where the military precedes the state, or potentially even creates the state? If a military survives the disintegration of one authority (in this case, the Ottoman Empire), unifies the remnants, defeats the same forces that caused the disintegration of that authority (Allied Forces attempting to enforce the Treaty of Sevres), and finally establishes a new authority under the leadership of the military's most famous general, is this military still purposive as Finer proposes, or has it instead become the very crescive institution that Finer asserts a military cannot be?⁷¹ What happens when the military conceives the state rather than the state conceiving the military? In scenarios such as these, the military might well see itself as vested with the creation and perpetuation of the state and associated norms.⁷²

This scenario is evidenced in the creation of modern Turkey. The Ottoman military was inseparable from the Ottoman Empire, and was in several ways the backbone of the empire.⁷³ Essential functions of the state such as taxation and census,

⁶⁹ Finer and Stanley, *Man on Horseback*, 7.

⁷⁰ Francis Fukuyama, *The Origins of Political Order: From Prehuman Times to the French Revolution* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2011), 15.

⁷¹ Finer and Stanley, *Man on Horseback*, 7.

⁷² Cook, *Ruling but Not Governing*, 30.

⁷³ Mesut Uyar and Edward J. Erickson, (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger Security International, 2009), 281.

bookkeeping and data archiving, and transportation and communication networks were all introduced to the empire by the military.⁷⁴ The military periodically intervened in politics throughout the establishment, expansion, and contraction of the Ottoman Empire, often for the purpose of reform or national unity. It was the formal creation of a constitutional republic that created the real opportunity structure for political intervention by the military on a permanent and institutionalized basis. Moreover, it was the four consecutive constitutions themselves that established legal guidance for military intervention in the Turkish government.

Beginning with the constitution of 1921 and continuing through each of the 1924, 1961, and 1982 constitutions, responsibility for protection of the state from both external and internal threats was placed in the hands of the military.⁷⁵ This was accomplished surreptitiously and demonstrated most recently through Articles 1 to 3 (the so-called “irrevocable provisions”) of the 1982 constitution. In these three articles, the Turkish state is defined as a Republic, secular in nature, loyal to the nationalism of Atatürk, and based on the fundamental tenets of the preamble. Furthermore, the Turkish territory and nation are indivisible and the language of both is Turkish.⁷⁶ Article 4 protects these articles by stating that Articles 1 through 3 “shall not be amended nor shall their amendment be proposed.”⁷⁷

Certain aspects of these irrevocable provisions, such as the republican nature of the state, the national anthem (Independence March), and the capital city (Ankara), are innocuous and common to constitutions. However, the nebulousness of provisions, such as loyalty to principles of the founder, to a certain type of nationalism, and the mandate of no “interference whatsoever by sacred religious feelings in state affairs,” begs the question: Who defines and identifies the “correct” nationalism, the true principles of

⁷⁴ Uyar and Erickson, *Military History*, 281.

⁷⁵ The 2001 constitutional amendments enacted before AKP election in accordance with EU reconciliation ended the military prerogative in this area.

⁷⁶ Turkish Grand National Assembly, *Constitution of the Republic of Turkey*, Article 3.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, Article 4.

Atatürk, or when religious “feelings” become too enmeshed in statecraft?⁷⁸ As the introduction noted, inasmuch as these provisions were written under the guidance of the military, the logical conclusion is that the military officials themselves were intended to be the final arbiter. The military has confirmed this conclusion when citing constitutional obligations before, during, and after various interventions in politics.⁷⁹

Support for (and codification of) the military’s preeminent role in supervising the Turkish government is derived from two primary sources: the Turkish Armed Forces Internal Service Law of 1961 and the National Security Council. Article 35 of the Internal Service Law asserts that “the duty of the Turkish Armed Forces is to protect and preserve the Turkish homeland and the Turkish Republic as defined in the constitution.”⁸⁰ The language of the 1961 Internal Service Law was identical to that of Article 34 of the Internal Service Law of 1935, written during single-party rule, and demonstrated the continuity of the Turkish military in politics.⁸¹ The Turkish Armed Forces Internal Service Directive further explains, “it is the duty of the Turkish Armed Forces to protect the Turkish homeland and the republic, by arms when necessary, against internal and external threats.”⁸²

While the Internal Service Laws and constitutions have delineated the role of the Turkish military, the institution of the MGK has been the mechanism that historically has allowed the military the unfettered ability to define the very threats against which they are charged to guard. Like the Internal Service Law, regulations governing the MGK have a long history in Turkish politics. The 1961 constitution originally established the MGK to advise the Council of Ministers on appropriate decision-making with regard to national security.⁸³ The prerogative to define threats, internal and external, to the state

⁷⁸ GNAT, *Constitution of the Republic of Turkey*, Preamble, paragraph 5.

⁷⁹ Capezza, “Turkey’s Military,” 2.

⁸⁰ Republic of Turkey, *Internal Service Law, Article 35*. trans. Gareth Jenkins (Turkey: Author, 1961), <http://www.adalet.gov.tr>

⁸¹ Gareth Jenkins, *Context and Circumstance: The Turkish Military and Politics*, vol. 337 of the Adelphi Papers (New York: Routledge, 2005), 45.

⁸² Ibid. Article 85/1, 45.

⁸³ GNAT, *Constitution of the Turkish Republic*, ed. Committee of National Unity (Ankara, Turkey: Author, 1961), Article 111.

flowed therefore from the construction of the MGK. Another key component of the 1961 constitution that provided leverage over elected officials was the Constitutional Court, which was endowed with impeachment authority for presidents, ministers, and other officials for failure to perform duties of the office.⁸⁴ Of the eleven permanent seats on the court, two were reserved for the military, one from the Military Court of Cassation and the other from the High Military Administrative Court of Appeals.

The 1982 constitution granted additional coercive power to the military by requiring that five of ten seats on the MGK be active military officers.⁸⁵ Also included in the 1982 constitution were requirements that the Council of Ministers “give priority consideration to the decisions of the MGK concerning the measures that it deems necessary for the preservation of the existence and independence of the State, the integrity and indivisibility of the country and the peace and security of society.”⁸⁶

The 1961 constitution created the MGK, but it was the 1982 constitution enshrined it as the ultimate arbiter of state security. Language such as “measures that it deems necessary” gave the military incredibly wide latitude to pursue any desired course against threats both internal and external.⁸⁷ The final legal authority for the military to maintain such deep influence over politics is the National Security Council Law of 1983. Article 2a clarifies: “National security means the defence and protection of the state against every kind of external and internal threat to the constitutional order, national existence, unity, and to all its interests and contractual rights in the international arena including in the *political, social, cultural, and economic spheres*” (emphasis added).⁸⁸ This law also created the office of the MGK General Secretariat that, until the seventh reform package (EU harmonization) was passed in July 2003, was required to be an active duty general or admiral. The secretariat is responsible for the creation of the

⁸⁴ Feroz Ahmad, *The Turkish Experiment in Democracy: 1950–1975*, ed. The Royal Institute of International Affairs (London, United Kingdom: Hurst, 1977), 186.

⁸⁵ GNAT, *Constitution of the Republic of Turkey*, Article 118.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Turkish Parliament, *Article 2a, National Security Council Law No. 2945*, trans. Gareth Jenkins (Ankara, Turkey: Justice Ministry, n.d.), <http://www.adalet.gov.tr>.

National Security Policy Document (NSPD) defining threats and appropriate responses, which would become a key component of military tutelage.

To reiterate: successive constitutions define Turkey as a republic that is required to be loyal to the ideals set forth by military leader Atatürk. The internal service laws gave the responsibility to the military for maintaining the security of the state from threats. The MGK gave the military the prerogative to counsel civilian leadership on military-related matters, and the MGK General Secretariat (required by law until 2003 to be a military officer) was responsible for identifying threats. These laws are responsible for creating not just the opportunity structure but also (in the military view) the responsibility to interfere in politics if and when politicians themselves became a threat (as defined by the military) to the nation-state. In this Byzantine structure, the NSPD could be (and was) created to identify other members of the MGK or politicians as threats to the state (typically because of religious views). Therefore, the civilians charged with running the country might not only be prevented from accessing national defense material, but would in fact be the subject of such material. With a historical, legal, and even professional (as the defenders of a specific vision for the state) justification for interference, military commanders would be foolish not to use their influence to keep civilian leadership on the “correct” path.⁸⁹

B. BEFORE THE REPUBLIC: THE MILITARY AND THE OTTOMANS

Well before the creation of the Republic of Turkey in 1923, the military of the Ottoman Empire had already established itself as an agent with the means and ability to exert political influence in the state. A politically active and educated officer corps that was familiar with the organization of the professional militaries of Europe became the means by which the military could force political concessions from the government.⁹⁰ As in the modern era, the officer corps of the armed forces proved adept at entering and

⁸⁹ Barany, *Soldier and the Changing State*, 27.

⁹⁰ Avigdor Levy, “Military Reform and the Problem of Centralization in the Ottoman Empire in the Eighteenth Century,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 18, no. 3 (1982), 238.

exiting politics in order to secure concessions from the government while positioning themselves as a perpetual influence in politics.

The political activity of the military from the late 19th century through the end of World War I would echo into the fledgling republic mainly through the role of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP, in Turkish the İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti), a collection of political groups collectively and colloquially referred to as the Young Turk movement. The Young Turk movement comprised three segments of society, originating from a determination to offer political opposition to the Hamidian regime, secret societies from universities, former Ottoman officials now living abroad, and secret cabals of army officers.⁹¹ The specific political objective of these groups was the restoration of constitutional rule and of a representative parliament, both of which had been suspended in 1878.⁹²

During the Tanzimat decrees of 1842, the Ottoman military was reorganized into territorial armies, essentially leaving the Ottoman Empire without a national army.⁹³ On the European landmass, these included the 2nd Corps (Thracian) and the 3rd Corps (Macedonian). Designed to improve military morale, the reorganization had the unintended effect of leaving each corps independent. When combined with the existent military prerogative to control officer education through military universities, these independent armies created the opportunity structure for the CUP to flourish.⁹⁴ In July 1908, under the leadership of the CUP, the officers of the 3rd Army Corps marched on Constantinople and successfully demanded the reinstatement of constitutional rule.

When Sultan Abdül Hamid relented on July 24, the CUP-led military had demonstrated the power of a popular military over an unpopular government and highlighted the conflict that can arise when confronted with a ruler without military support and a military without a legitimate mandate to rule. Despite nearly twenty years of strident opposition to the Sultan, the military neither took control of the government

⁹¹ Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 305.

⁹² Ibid., 304.

⁹³ William Hale, *Turkish Politics and the Military* (London: Routledge, 1994), 22.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 30.

nor deposed the Sultan, but merely set itself up as the guardian of the newly returned constitutional order.⁹⁵ The return of parliamentary rule had the additional effect of shifting power back to the Ottoman bureaucracy (and therefore the military) and away from the Sultan.⁹⁶

The 1908 coup was unprecedented in three ways: the action was perpetrated by conservatives, the intent was restoration rather than destruction or creation, and finally, the Young Turk Revolution ushered a new type of regime: one-party rule.⁹⁷ Each of these aspects of the 1908 coup would become staples of the next century of Turkish civil-military relation, wherein a conservative military would “restore” stability to the state. The conflict between the Sultan and the CUP would continue and, in March 1909, culminated in an attempted counter-coup by a collection of Islamists, liberals, and supporters of the Sultan, known as the 31 March incident.⁹⁸

To protect the 1908 coup, the CUP immediately organized an “Action Army” to put down the rebellion, which it successfully did.⁹⁹ The coups of 1908 and 1909 had a profound impact on the future of Turkish civil-military relations by demonstrating a successful pattern: the military steps in to make corrections to the ruling regime, deposes failed governments (Sultan Mehmet V replacing Abdul Hamid in 1909), imposes martial law when necessary to protect the changes (martial law was declared from 1909 to 1911 following the 1909 counter-coup), and alters constitutions to diminish the powers of the authorities over the military. Constitutional changes in 1909 dramatically reduced the powers of the Sultan by taking away the privilege of ruling the state, leaving the monarch a figurehead.

As the Ottoman Empire continued to collapse upon itself, the military staged a final coup in 1913 in an attempt to stop the government from ceding the strategically

⁹⁵ Erik Jan Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 3rd ed. (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 94.

⁹⁶ Ryan Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores: Violence, Ethnicity, and the End of the Ottoman Empire, 1912–1923*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 15.

⁹⁷ M. Sukru Hanioglu, *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008), 150.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 154.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

important former capital of the empire, Edirne. Against the backdrop of a public outraged at the government, the military stormed the Sublime Porte (the term for the head of government named for the entrance to government buildings; in Ottoman Turkish the Babı-Ali), killing the Chief of Staff, and forcing the Grand Vizier to sign his own resignation.¹⁰⁰ After the Babı-Ali coup, the military was consumed with World War I when the Ottomans entered the conflict as an Entente power.

C. 1923–1950: SINGLE PARTY POLITICS

Having experienced the collapse of the Ottoman Empire—in large part due to the predations of external countries over the previous centuries, followed by the attempted division under the Treaty of Sevres—what became the Republic of Turkey largely viewed external states as an existential threat during the formative years of the country. During the single-party period, Turkey was largely removed from international affairs, focusing on the development of a viable Western-style nation surrounded by potential enemies. Civil-military relations during this period reflected this reality, with a government headed by former officers and current military leadership focused on external threats rather than the civilian leadership. After the War of Independence, those military officers who sought leadership in government in the new regime followed the example of Mustafa Kemal and resigned their military commissions.

The single-party era of Turkish statecraft was dominated by the cult of personality surrounding Mustafa Kemal (after 1934 and the Surname Law Kemal Atatürk) from the conclusion of the Turkish War of Independence in 1922 until his death in 1938. Kemal rose to fame as an officer during the Allied assault on Gallipoli, which the Ottoman forces successfully repelled, but even before World War I was a well-known and active member of the CUP inner circle.¹⁰¹ It is suspected that Kemal was an advocate within the CUP of a complete disengagement of the military from politics following the 1913 coup, and was definitely an advocate of Turkish nationalism.¹⁰² Both of these characteristics

¹⁰⁰ Hale, *Turkish Politics*, 44.

¹⁰¹ Erik Jan Zürcher, *The Unionist Factor: The Role of the Committee of Union and Progress in the Turkish National Movement 1905-1926* (Leiden, The Netherlands: E.J. Brill, 1984), 53.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 51.

would be reflected in Kemal's future leadership of Turkey, which demanded both a separation of military from the government that Kemal led, and a stridently nationalistic leadership style.

Kemal was also the leader of the nationalist movement within the military during the Turkish War of Independence.¹⁰³ While there were other officers of prominence, to Kemal fell control of the nationalist movement when Allied forces partitioning the remains of the Ottoman Empire occupied Istanbul. His success in defeating the recent victors of World War I at the helm of the only remaining military force in country—as well as the *de facto* commander-in-chief during the war years—gave Kemal the necessary prominence to take the lead in forging a new state after the War of Independence. While fame and fortune allowed Kemal a privileged position in the creation of modern Turkey, the military officers and leaders who fought the Allies in World War I and the War of Independence were virtually all members of the CUP. CUP members shared common history, from activity in the second constitutional period from 1908 to 1918, through the Balkan War in 1913, and through the creation of the state in 1923.¹⁰⁴ From the return of constitutional rule in 1908 until the constitutions of the modern republic, the CUP was a constant presence in Turkish politics.

The first constitution to govern the Turkish people following Ottoman rule was enacted in 1921 by the Grand National Assembly, which declared itself the only and true representative of the nation.¹⁰⁵ This statement had important implications for the immediate period, by proclaiming to occupying powers that the Sultanate no longer governed the nation, and for the future, by suggesting that whatever state followed the war would be representative. While minimal in coercive power (inasmuch as Turkey was

¹⁰³ Alternately called the Greco-Turkish War, from 1919 to 1922, the Turks fought a war against a combined Greek, French, and British force attempting to enforce the Treaty of Sevres. The war eventually concluded with the Allied forces being driven from Asia Minor and the Republic of Turkey being established after the war's end.

¹⁰⁴ Erik Jan Zürcher, *The Great Game: The Struggle for Empire in Central Asia* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2010), 143.

¹⁰⁵ Until 1922 and the conclusion of the War of Independence, the Ottoman Sultanate was considered to exist in foreign captivity and was technically the head of state. Allied forces attempted throughout the war to manipulate the Turks into concessions by using the authority of the Sultan living in occupied Istanbul.

both occupied and still technically a monarchy), this constitution would serve as a foundation for future governments.

After independence in 1923, the Grand National Assembly constructed a new constitution for the purpose of more accurately reflecting the status of the new nation as a constitutional republic. The 1924 document shared important similarities with the preceding constitution, such as the principle of national sovereignty as well as the condition that legislative and executive power would reside in the Assembly. The 1924 constitution was majoritarian rather than pluralistic in design, assigning importance to the “general will of the nation.”¹⁰⁶ While this document was intended to be democratic in nature, it also began to demonstrate the preeminence of the state over the citizens of the state and suffered from a lack of checks and balances. The latter proved unproblematic; the majority of the time that the 1924 constitution was in effect the country was under single-party rule of the Kemalist CHP, the same party serving in opposition to the AKP from 2002 to 2011.

An early challenge for any new nation-state can be the creation of a “national” identity.¹⁰⁷ From 1923 forward, the fledgling Turkish state went through dramatic and rapid change, everything from government to language, to dress and religious practices changed in accordance with the new nationalist, secular republic. During this period, military officers followed the example of Mustafa Kemal and left military service before entering the government, and the military served as a defender of the new republic and of the civilian regime. Turkish civil-military relations under Atatürk were most notable for inactivity, with many prominent politicians being former officers and confidants of Kemal. However, the military was used by Kemal as a necessary instrument in modernization, a role that would give rise to the sentiment that the military was intended by Kemal to protect the Republic even from itself.¹⁰⁸ In every possible fashion during the

¹⁰⁶ Özbudun, *Constitutional System of Turkey*, 8.

¹⁰⁷ Mir Zohair Husain, *Global Islamic Politics*, 2nd ed. (New York: Longman, 2003), 144.

¹⁰⁸ Austin Bay, *Ataturk: Lessons in Leadership from the Greatest General of the Ottoman Empire* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 164.

formative years of the Republic, Turkey was founded and led by current and former officers of the armed forces.

D. 1950–1961: MULTI-PARTY POLITICS BEGIN

As the world began to bifurcate along Cold War lines, so too did Turkish politics, with the introduction of elections and multi-party government shortly after World War II. As many of the political leaders during the single-party era were former officers, the division of Turkish politics into multiple parties and a voting electorate meant that the role of the military would be subject to the desires of future elected governments. How the military would respond to these early governments would set the tone for future civil-military relations. As Turkey expanded international relations, the involvement with foreign governments would impact the relationship between the military and the politicians. Multi-party elections meant that, for the first time, the military could be subject to politicians who were neither former military nor Kemalists. At the same time, the budding Cold War meant that external threats remained a priority consideration, making the initial multi-party period a time of instability for the armed forces and the civilian politicians.

The first opposition party sanctioned by the Kemalist establishment and the CHP was the Demokrat Parti (DP), founded in January 1946 by former CHP members discontent with the direction of both the party and the state. The external pressures of post-World War II international relations played an essential part in this multi-party expansion. A desire for American political, economic, and military support contributed to Prime Minister İsmet İnönü's conclusion that the chief shortcoming of Turkish politics was a lack of an independent opposition party, and declared that the 1947 elections would be free and direct.¹⁰⁹

When the DP gained prominence with the voters, the CHP chose to move elections forward from July 1947 to July 1946, substantially limiting the time that the

¹⁰⁹ Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 211.

new opposition party had to effectively organize and campaign nationally.¹¹⁰ Despite the obvious political maneuvering by the CHP to maintain power, the efforts to expand political participation were enough to allow Turkey to make substantial inroads into the Western block of states aligning against communist Russia. In 1948, Turkey became a recipient of Marshall Fund aid, joined the Organisation of European Economic Co-operation (CEEC), and received military credit to purchase arms from the United States.¹¹¹ Accession into the Council of Europe in 1949 and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in 1952 completed the Turkish transition from an isolated single-party authoritarian state to an electoral democracy securely ensconced in the West for the coming Cold War.

National elections were held again in 1950, this time after the opposition DP had several years to distance itself from the CHP and to make the voters aware of the DP as a viable option to the establishment CHP. The nature of Turkey's d'Hondt method or parliamentary apportionment meant that winning a 55.2 percent of the general vote in 1950—to the CHP's 39.6 percent—gave the DP 415 seats in the new parliament, while the CHP received a mere 69 seats.¹¹² With this majority position in parliament, the DP was able to nominate the prime minister, for which it chose founding member Adnan Menderes. For the first time, Turkey reached a minimalist level of democracy, with a peaceful transition from authoritarian CHP rule to the democratic regime governed by the elected DP.

Among the first DP actions were a purge of senior military officers thought too loyal to the CHP and the reintroduction of Arabic during the call to prayer. Both actions directly challenged two key aspects of the Turkish military, autonomy and commitment to the Kemalist principle of secularism. In 1954, Turks again elected the DP to lead the

¹¹⁰ Gareth Jenkins, *Political Islam in Turkey: Running West, Heading East?* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 115.

¹¹¹ Sinan Ciddi, *Kemalism in Turkish Politics: The Republican People's Party, Secularism and Nationalism* (London: Routledge, 2009), 31.

¹¹² Turkey employs the d'Hondt system of parliamentary apportionment that favors large parties at the expense of smaller parties. This is exacerbated by a 'threshold' requirement wherein "political parties which receive less than 10 percent of the total valid votes cast nationally cannot be assigned any seats in the GNAT." This d'Hondt method has most recently been a key force in the ability of the AKP to similarly form overwhelming parliamentary majorities from much smaller general vote victories.

government, the party increasing their parliamentary majority to 503 of 541 seats available.¹¹³ Following this victory, the DP began to reflect the CHP of the previous decades, equating their government with the state itself, and using stridently majoritarian tactics to delegitimize the opposition CHP (tied to the military through their mutual origin in Kemalism).¹¹⁴

Between 1954 and 1960, the DP grew increasingly aggressive, first by introducing new rules in 1954 to forcibly retire civil servants after 25 years of service (designed to purge the bureaucracy of CHP loyalists).¹¹⁵ Additionally, in 1956, the DP revived the 1940 National Defense Law to permit the military (after the purge thought to be more agreeable to the DP) to control prices and supply of defense-related goods, changed the press laws to advance government control (despite campaign pledges to liberalize), and banned political meetings except during election campaigns.¹¹⁶ Because the Turkish military had close ties with the governing CHP for the previous three decades, and as many CHP leaders themselves were former military officers, the DP had reason to question the loyalty of the military to their government. Despite the purge of officers in 1950, nine military officers were arrested in 1957 and accused of plots to overthrow the government. Owing to military prerogatives in the judicial branch, a military tribunal tried those arrested. Each was acquitted while the informant was convicted.

Throughout 1957, the DP under Menderes continued to dismiss officials and judges, prosecute journalists, and essentially wage open political war against the CHP and former Prime Minister and President İsmet Pasha (İnönü), whose status as a hero of the War of Independence was still prominent amongst the populace and who also served

¹¹³ The Turkish system of parliamentary apportionment sees variable numbers in the Grand National Assembly between elections. While in 1950 there were 539 members seated, the 1954 election saw 541 members seated. Since 1950, the size of parliament has varied from as low 399 in 1983 to as high as 610 in 1957. The modes have been 450 until 1991 and 550 since the 1995 elections.

¹¹⁴ az if Mandacı, "Turkey's Unfinished Transition to Democracy," in *Democratic Consolidation in Turkey: State, Political Parties, Civil Society, Civil-Military Relations, Socio-Economic Development, EU, Rise of Political Islam, and Separatist Kurdish Nationalism*, ed. Müge Aknur (Boca Raton, FL: Universal, 2012), 69.

¹¹⁵ ürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 231.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

as a transitional figure between political eras.¹¹⁷ Using tactics identical to those used against them a decade earlier, the DP moved up parliamentary elections, from 1958 to 1957, and in doing so clung to power, but by a much narrower margin and with less than 50 percent of the popular vote.

By 1959, relations between the DP and opposition CHP had deteriorated to the point of violence between deputies during parliamentary assembly. The corruption and pettiness of the Menderes regime was epitomized to many by what has since become known as the Kayseri incident. In April 1960, İnönü traveled through the Kayseri province to consult local CHP members who had allegedly been unfairly treated by local DP authorities; the Kayseri governor stopped him at the provincial border. After a three-hour confrontation with the governor, İnönü was allowed passage, only to be stopped again the following day. This second time, İnönü simply walked passed the barricade to the salute of attendant soldiers. The Kayseri incident was considered to demonstrate not simply the base tactics that the Menderes-led DP might engage in, but also the level of support that the regime might expect from a military whose living legends were treated shabbily.¹¹⁸ When, later that April, the DP announced a parliamentary commission with sweeping powers to investigate the CHP, university demonstrations broke out.¹¹⁹

The sometimes-violent riots continued until May 27, 1960, when the Turkish military occupied strategic spots in Istanbul and Ankara and, using recently confiscated radio stations, broadcast a “breakfast communiqué.”¹²⁰ This communiqué included the military rationale behind the intervention, as well as insight into the role that the military officials saw for themselves:

Our armed forces have taken this initiative for the purpose of extricating the parties from the irreconcilable situation into which they have fallen and for the purpose of having just and free elections, to be held as soon as

¹¹⁷ Carter Vaughn Findley, *Turkey, Islam, Nationalism, and Modernity: A History, 1789–2007* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), 309.

¹¹⁸ Hale, *Turkish Politics*, 105.

¹¹⁹ Findley, *Turkey, Islam, Nationalism*, 309.

¹²⁰ The 1960 coup was unique in that the majority of the officers involved in the plot were between thirty-five and forty-six years of age, from lower middle classes, not the elites of society. Indeed, months were spent attempting to recruit a suitable general officer to provide top cover for the endeavor.

possible under the supervision and arbitration of an above-party and impartial administration, and for handing over the administration to which ever party wins the elections.¹²¹

Spoken by Colonel Alparslan Türkeş, all three sections of this statement expose an essential aspect of what future civil-military relations would look like in Turkey. First, when “necessary” to keep the civilians in order, the military will step in. Second, the military will act as an arbiter over elections because the military is “above-party.”¹²² Third, the military will willingly step down for properly elected civilians. This last clause established the principle of guardians, not authoritarians, of the state. That is, the military’s role would be to mentor the state and keep Turkey on the “correct” Kemalist path, as opposed to a permanent ruling class free from the restrictions of parliament. However, political parties and politicians to whom the military did not want to hand over control would simply be banned from political participation.

When control was given back to the voters after the coup and subsequent military junta, the military had created the MGK and installed themselves as guardians with the Internal Service Law. They also created the Ordu Yardımlaşma Kurumu (Armed Forces Pension Fund or OYAK), which would become a powerful economic actor in the Turkish economy and give the military a source of funding outside parliamentary channels.¹²³ Despite the willingness of the military to step down, the Rubicon had been crossed; there could be no turning back. Cem Eroğul postulates, “The greatest damage the Democratic Party inflicted on Turkey was that it nearly forced the army into politics, permanently injuring the tradition of civilian rule meticulously preserved since Atatürk.”¹²⁴

The National Unity Committee (formed by young officers after the coup), approved three death sentences: Prime Minister Adnan Menderes, along with his foreign and finance ministers. Both İnönü and the leadership of the opposition CHP (which the

¹²¹ Dietrich Jung and Wolfango Piccoli, *Turkey at the Crossroads: Ottoman Legacies and a Greater Middle East* (London: Zed, 2001), 83.

¹²² The constitutional role of an above-party arbiter is actually assigned to the Turkish President, whose role is to represent the state and to act as a non-political leader between factions.

¹²³ Kerem k tem, *Turkey since 1989: Angry Nation* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 44.

¹²⁴ Cem Eroğul, “The Establishment of Multiparty Rule: 1945–71,” in *Turkey in Transition: New Perspectives*, ed. Irvin C. Schick and Ertugrul Tonak (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 118.

DP replaced in 1954) attempted to intervene and halt the executions. On September 16, 1961, the military executed the first democratically elected prime minister of Turkey. The new president of Turkey from 1960 to 1966 would be General Cemal Gürsel, former ground forces commander, recruited by the coup plotters specifically to provide general officer top cover.¹²⁵

The 1960 coup initiated a new cycle of Turkish military focus on internal security and development as core values belonging to the armed forces alongside the more traditional military role of external war fighting. In doing so, the military began to reflect a hybrid conception of professionalism combining traditional military roles with what Alfred Stepan refers to as “new professionalism.”¹²⁶ According to new professionalism, militaries will study those conditions that enable revolutionary movements and then develop doctrines and techniques to crush such movements.¹²⁷ The combination of traditional and new professionalism explains how the Turkish military could claim loyalty to the state and professionalism as institutional values while simultaneously overthrowing civilian governments. When a military is operating under the aegis of new professionalism the scope of professional behavior becomes unrestricted, the military becomes more politicized, and military role expansion occurs.¹²⁸ Each of these characteristics of the new professional military is reflected in the Turkish case, and with each intervention these traits were made manifest.

E. 1961–1983: THE RISE OF MILITARY TUTELAGE

After the 1960 intervention, the military was able to operate as an autonomous institution and sought to protect the new regime it established for itself rather than a particular political party or government.¹²⁹ In the eyes of the military leaders, stability of

¹²⁵ Kemal H. Karpat, “The Military and Politics in Turkey, 1960–64: A Socio-Cultural Analysis of a Revolution,” *The American Historical Review* 75, no. 6 (October 1970), 1666.

¹²⁶ Alfred Stepan, *Arguing Comparative Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 25.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 26.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 27.

¹²⁹ Feroz Ahmad, *The Turkish Experiment in Democracy: 1950–1975*, ed. The Royal Institute of International Affairs (London: Hurst, 1977), 194.

the regime and the republic was the primary concern, and the military would be willing to act against any party that threatened the regime.¹³⁰ Civil-military relations during this period were dominated by military threat considerations. Internal political violence and lack of consensus drove more military interventions while the military attempted to “fine-tune” its role in politics. External threats such as Greece, the Cold War, and Cyprus encouraged the military to maintain a strong domestic role, and failures of democracy during this period received little to no criticism; Western allies in the U.S. and Europe were more concerned with a strong NATO military on the Soviet border than they were with the inability of political parties and actors to govern effectively under the growing military tutelage.

The occupants of the office of president under the 1961 constitution (in place for nineteen years) demonstrate the preeminence of the military during and after the transition to civilian control. Despite provisions in Article 95 of the constitution stipulating that the president be elected from members of the Turkish Grand National Assembly (GNAT) by secret ballot, all three presidents serving from 1961 to 1980 were former military leaders. As the GNAT had been dispersed during the coup, parliamentary elections for new civilian leadership were held in 1961. This assembly had National Unity Committee leader and interim head of state General Cemal Gürsel imposed upon them as the new president.

In 1966, when chronic health concerns forced Gürsel to step down, the leader of the majority Justice Party (Süleyman Demirel) offered the presidency to General Cevdet Sunay despite having the necessary votes to elect one of the party’s own members to the presidency.¹³¹ Like Gürsel before him, Cevdet was not a member of the GNAT as prescribed by the constitution, but rather the highest-ranking military officer in the country: Chief of the General Staff. This pattern continued in 1972 when active Chief of Staff Faruk Gürler made a bid for the presidency that was defeated by a coalition of Justice and (typically pro-military) CHP. Alas, the defeat of Gürler required the acceptance by the civilians of former military commander Admiral Fahri Korutürk (also

¹³⁰ Ahmad, *Turkish Experiment in Democracy*, 194.

¹³¹ Özbudun, *Constitutional System of Turkey*, 12.

not a member of the GNAT) as the third consecutive military commander to serve as president after the 1960 coup.

In addition to controlling the office of president, the military used the 1961 transition to alter the relationship between the government and the military on a permanent basis. Former members of the National Unity Committee junta were made lifetime *ex officio* senators, given full judicial immunity from prosecution resulting from any aspect of the coup, and provisional Article 4 of the new constitution stipulated that all laws passed by the military regime could not be challenged on the basis of constitutionality before the constitutional court.¹³² Finally, large portions of judges (nearly half of the judges from the Council of State) were forcibly retired, and the judicial branch transformed into an instrument of “tutelary control over elected bodies.”¹³³

Essential to the 1961 constitution were efforts to increase political participation and encourage greater variance among political parties represented in parliament. This was done in a belief that expansion of political parties would help prevent the tendency of dominant parties to behave in an authoritarian fashion, as both the CHP and the DP had done during previous decades. By the end of the 1960s, however, the ease with which new political parties could gain access to parliament had severely destabilized the government, with eight political parties vying for control. As permanent gridlock set in, the inability of the government to meet the challenges of the 1960s led to political violence. Dissatisfied groups would reject the political process and take their concerns to the street, thereby undermining the very political institutions they had been elected to serve, as well as treading in civil disturbance territory that the Turkish military considers off limits.¹³⁴

Before the 1961 constitution, ideological political parties were nonexistent. However, the opportunity created by the 1961 constitution allowed leftist, ultranationalist, and Islamist groups to flourish. Parties such as the Marxist Labor Party

¹³² GNAT, *Constitution of the Turkish Republic*, Part Five, Temporary Article 4, 44.

¹³³ Özbudun, *Constitutional System of Turkey*, 13.

¹³⁴ Momayezi, “Civil-Military Relations,” 8.

and the Nationalist Action Party became increasingly militant, with bank robberies, kidnappings, and commando training camps used to draw attention to platforms.¹³⁵ Under the leadership of former military officer Alparslan Türkeş (the same officer who delivered the breakfast communiqué radio address after the 1960 coup), the Nationalist Action Party even created a paramilitary youth wing known as the “gray wolves.”¹³⁶ From the left were organizations such as the Dev-Genç, a conglomeration of student groups and clubs whose political objectives ranged from university reform to outlawing American military presence in the country, to revolution. In response to the violence from the paramilitary gray wolves, Dev-Genç armed to defend (using guerilla warfare models imported from South America) leftist actors against both the fascist gray wolves and the police.¹³⁷ Ultimately, the fragmentation of both the military and society was an unintended consequence of the electoral system changes in the 1961 constitution.¹³⁸

In both 1962 and 1963, Colonel Talat Aydemir led additional coup attempts with significant support from other colonels and general officers. Due to disunity among the armed forces over the need for additional coups so shortly after transition to civilian control, these attempts and others throughout the 1960s were defeated or stillborn. In the case of Aydemir, a military tribunal found him guilty and he was executed for his coup attempts despite having factional support in the military. The 1960 coup had shattered the unity of the Turkish military itself, and this disunity would have additional consequences as the military struggled to find the desired mixture of civilian leadership and military tutelage.¹³⁹

While the government struggled with the inclusion of parties not necessarily loyal to the notion of representative government, the military itself began to fracture along

¹³⁵ Findley, *Turkey, Islam, Nationalism*, 315.

¹³⁶ Paul M. Pittman, III, ed., *Turkey: A Country Study*, 4th ed. (Washington, DC: Federal Research Division, 1987), 62.

¹³⁷ Özgür Mutlu Ulus, *The Army and the Radical Left in Turkey: Military Coups, Socialist Revolution and Kemalism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 25.

¹³⁸ Üstün Ergüder and Richard I Hofferbert, “The 1983 General Elections in Turkey: Continuity of Change in Voting Patterns?,” in *State, Democracy and the Military: Turkey in the 1980s*, ed. Metin Heper and Ahmet Evin (Hamburg, Germany: de Gruyter, 1988), 94.

¹³⁹ Ulus, *Army and the Radical Left*, 16.

ideological lines as conservative members battled leftist colleagues unhappy with the direction of the state since the 1960 coup.¹⁴⁰ As the decade closed, leftist forces within the military grew increasingly unsatisfied with the governing center-right Justice Party and began to foment another coup with the intent to implement a leftist government.¹⁴¹

To prevent such a takeover of the Republic by radical forces, top military commanders instead conducted a pre-emptive “soft-coup” on March 12, 1971.¹⁴² Citing the failure of the Justice Party to quell street violence, the military delivered an ultimatum to the Demirel government demanding a “strong and credible government be formed that would be able to end the ‘anarchy’ and carry out reforms ‘in a Kemalist spirit.’”¹⁴³ Inasmuch as the anarchy resulted from the sheer impossibility of forming a strong government under current electoral rules, the memo essentially amounted to a demand for a Demirel resignation. The language of this ultimatum gives perfect insight into the minds of the military establishment throughout the history of the modern Republic. The military has seen itself not just as guardians of the Turkish Republic, but also as supervisors who share a role in guaranteeing the proper management of civil society and government.

The 1971 coup had roots in the margins of the 1961 constitution that was designed to provide for greater multi-party participation in parliament. However, by 1969, eight political parties were represented in the National Assembly. This expansion of represented parties meant constant gridlock. Once the process was effectively paralyzed, dissatisfied groups rejected the political process and brought their concerns to the street, thereby treading in the civil-disturbance territory that the Turkish military considered off limits.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁰ Eligür, *Mobilization of Political Islam*, 67.

¹⁴¹ Findley, *Turkey, Islam, Nationalism*, 316.

¹⁴² Özbudun, *Constitutional System of Turkey*, 14.

¹⁴³ Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 258.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 8.

While the military left parliament in place, the cabinet was replaced with “non-partisan” experts who would ostensibly serve above party interests.¹⁴⁵ This new cabinet immediately implemented martial law, outlawed labor strikes, and engaged in the prosecution of any parties or individuals affiliated with the preceding political violence. From 1971 to 1973 (return to civilian rule occurred in 1973), three successive cabinets (none elected or appointed by civilians) amended the 1961 constitution to again expand military autonomy and limit freedoms previously granted to universities, radio stations, and political parties.

The 1971 intervention brought to the foreground an enigmatic condition of Turkish civil society; support for a military intervention was strong, yet factionalized.¹⁴⁶ Many citizens were glad to see the military quell the violence and anarchy, and the intervention included a public endorsement by former President İnönü, who had left office in 1950.¹⁴⁷ Future military interventions would similarly receive mixed responses, with some happy for the political reset and others upset about the interference by the military in civilian matters. The tendency of the TSK to poll high in opinion polls has sometimes been mistaken for support of intervention, rather than simple fear of insecurity or chaos in the streets from a lack of authority.¹⁴⁸

While the military had not disbanded parliament, throughout the decade of the 1970s, the assembly had little ability to combat the struggles facing the nation. From 1971 to the 1980 coup, Turkey endured eleven different governments, some in power for as long as three years and others for as little as four weeks. As parties lacked continuity or even general support, none proved able to improve the economy, stem violence, or

¹⁴⁵ Mandacı, “Turkey’s Unfinished Transition,” 76.

¹⁴⁶ Kemal H. Karpat, “Military Interventions: Army-Civilian Relations in Turkey before and after 1980,” in *State, Democracy and the Military: Turkey in the 1980s*, ed. Metin Heper and Ahmet Evrim (Hamburg, Germany: de Gruyter, 1988), 147.

¹⁴⁷ The position of İnönü regarding the 1971 coup demonstrates the sometimes confusing nature of Turkish civil-military relations. While İsmet immediately denounced the military intervention (a point brought up by those opposed to military intervention), when made aware that the new government would be run by İnönü associate Nihat Erim, İnönü then gave his public support (a point brought up by those in favor of military intervention).

¹⁴⁸ Ali Murat Yel, “A Healthy and Democratic Civil-Military Relationship in Turkey: Accountability of the Both Entities,” *European Journal of Economic and Political Studies* 2, no. 1 (2009), 85.

expand desired freedoms. Correlated to the disunity was the increasing political polarization between the right (which by this time included centrists, Islamists, and extreme nationalists) and the left (now composed of left-of-center parties, social movements, and Marxist revolutionaries). Combined with the powerless coalition governments of the decade, this made effective governance nearly impossible.¹⁴⁹ Both left- and right-wing forces had even infiltrated the national police force to wreak havoc from within.¹⁵⁰

By the end of the decade, under the lack of law and order, the fabric of society had degenerated to the point where roving bands of vigilantes would confront citizens on the streets and demand to know (usually under threat of physical harm) their political proclivities.¹⁵¹ Between 1977 and 1980, political violence in Turkey was devastating to the political psyche of Turks. Statistically, the 5,200 plus deaths and more than 14,000 wounded from domestic unrest were roughly equivalent to the casualty figures from the Turkish War of Independence waged against the Greeks from 1919 to 1922.¹⁵²

The origins of the 1980 coup reside in the defense of Kemalist ideology, manifested in the form of national security (internal or external) and secularism. Chief of Staff General Kenan Evren appealed directly to all parties to end the partisan fighting and work towards a broad-based nationally supported consensus before the military would have to guarantee the security and secularism of the republic. On September 6, at a mass rally at Konya in the heartland of Anatolia, Prime Minister Erbakan (in the eyes of the military) directly assaulted the Kemalist legacy as well as that of Atatürk. Religious fundamentalists demanded the return of Islamic law in Turkey, and “showed disrespect for the national flag and anthem.”¹⁵³ Generals Evren and Saltik cited this rally as the “catalytic factor in their decision to intervene.”¹⁵⁴

¹⁴⁹ Oktem, *Turkey since 1989*, 52.

¹⁵⁰ Momayezi, “Civil-Military Relations,” 9.

¹⁵¹ Eyewitness account as recounted by Cem Aydogdu.

¹⁵² Momayezi, “Civil-Military Relations,” 8.

¹⁵³ Pittman, *Turkey: A Country Study*, 81.

¹⁵⁴ Momayezi, “Civil-Military Relations,” 9.

On September 12, 1980, with the prospect of civil war a strong possibility, the Turkish armed forces again intervened, this time completely dissolving parliament and suspending all political activity. Huntington noted such military intervention during times of civil unrest is not only a potentially beneficial act, but also the usual response to escalation of social conflict coupled with a decline in the effectiveness and legitimacy of elected leadership.¹⁵⁵ The 1980 intervention enjoyed even stronger public support than 1971, an important factor for the military because, unlike the 1960 and 1971 interventions, in 1980 the military lacked significant organized support and/or political cover from any particular party or social group.¹⁵⁶

Public support reflects Huntington's suggestion:

In a situation of escalating conflict the military coup thus has the immediate effect of reducing the level of participation [in street violence], inducing withdrawal from the streets of the competing social forces, and producing a feeling of relief and harmony.¹⁵⁷

Evren's October statement explains the military position that the stability of the state created by Atatürk was a justification for military intervention:

The Turkish Armed Forces would never allow the Turkish Republic, which they inherited from Atatürk, to be taken over by traitors. No one should attempt, for evil purposes, to take advantage of the patience of the military and their seriousness of purpose concerning this issue...The sole *raison d'être* of the Turkish Armed Forces is to defend this great country as an indivisible whole against its internal as well as external enemies, and of seeing to it that this country will always be secure and its citizens happy and well cared for.¹⁵⁸

Like military statements following the 1960 coup, Evren's language is shockingly blunt. He does not shy away from two concepts pivotal to the military's understanding of Turkish civil-military relations. First is the idea that the military inherited the Republic from Atatürk; the relationship is possessive in nature as opposed to subservient. Second,

¹⁵⁵ Huntington, *Political Order in Changing*, 216.

¹⁵⁶ Karpas, "Military Interventions: Army-Civilian," 150.

¹⁵⁷ Huntington, *Political Order in Changing*, 217.

¹⁵⁸ Frank Tachau and Metin Heper, "The State, Politics, and the Military in Turkey," *Comparative Politics* 16, no. 1 (1983), 28.

the Turkish military considers itself as caretakers of the state, even to the point of providing security and taking care of the citizens. These values are reflected in four tasks the army set for itself during military rule from 1980 to 1983: (1) To suppress domestic terrorism, (2) to restore economic growth, (3) to prevent lapse into anarchy using a new constitution and legal institutions, and (4) to carefully prepare the way for smooth transition to civilian control after the achievement of these goals.¹⁵⁹

Coup attempts led by marginalized military factions but defeated by the military itself—in 1962 and 1963, along with the “soft-coup” of 1971, and the 1980 coup—all support the notion that the military acts to protect the state from fractious and destructive elements in both society and the military itself. That the military would suffer from some of the same issues that society does was a prediction of Janowitz and the civic-republican thesis.¹⁶⁰ While not the expected behavior of a military dedicated to civilian control, the actions of the Turkish military from 1960 to 1980 do reflect the behavior one would expect from an institution rigidly loyal to a unique concept of the nation as created and bequeathed by the founder, Atatürk. In the mind of the military, the institution was “acting to save Turkish democracy from itself.”¹⁶¹

Turkish policy expert Ahmet Evin noted that, contrary to popular beliefs, the military could not have intervened solely to establish law and policing functions because, in each of 1960, 1971, and 1980, parliament had already declared martial law, prior to the military intervention.¹⁶² Something else had to be in play to motivate military interventions; the military had removed itself from government relatively swiftly after satisfying publicly stated objectives. Barany suggests two circumstances for reduced military involvement after a period of control: (1) failure at governing and, (2) “Mission

¹⁵⁹ William Hale, “Transition to Civilian Governments in Turkey: The Military Perspective,” in *State, Democracy and the Military: Turkey in the 1980s*, ed. Metin Heper and Ahmet Evin (Hamburg, Germany: de Gruyter, 1988), 55.

¹⁶⁰ Janowitz, *Professional Soldier*, 234.

¹⁶¹ George Harris, “The Role of the Military in Turkey in the 1980s: Guardians or Decision-Makers?,” in *State, Democracy and the Military: Turkey in the 1980s*, ed. Metin Heper and Ahmet Evin (Hamburg, Germany: de Gruyter, 1988), 193.

¹⁶² Ahmet Evin, “Changing Patterns of Cleavages before and after 1980,” in *State, Democracy and the Military: Turkey in the 1980s*, ed. Metin Heper and Ahmet Evin (Hamburg, Germany: de Gruyter, 1988), 204.

Accomplished.”¹⁶³ The words and decisions of the Turkish military following each intervention seem indicative of an institution that did in fact accomplish its objectives. It therefore had no further reason for remaining in control, but rather desired the return of civilian authority.

The 1982 constitution focused on expanding the role of the presidential authority (not subject to popular elections and a position that the military can influence by pressuring elected politicians), along with that of the MGK, to prevent the political instability.¹⁶⁴ Though ostensibly designed to make recommendations to the Council of Ministers regarding matters of national security (internal and external), the power of the military could make those recommendations closer to orders depending on how strongly the military presses for a specific course of action.¹⁶⁵

F. 1983–2002: THE TUTELARY STATE

The period from 1983 to 2002 represents the pinnacle of military tutelage over the state. Each of the preceding interventions had placed greater privileges in the hands of the military and, during this window, the military served as mentors with the full force of history and jurisprudence over the civilian politicians. With the ability to define threats, recommend courses of action, and apply pressure to ensure that the direction of the state mirrored that which the military desired, the military dominated the civilians on issues of high politics such as national defense and foreign policy.

Civil-military relations of the period reflected the dominant military position in controlling any and all political debates that touched on military concerns, including everything from the office of president to school curriculum and radio station broadcasting. While the collapse of the Soviet Union removed an existential threat to the country, the Iran-Iraq War and the Persian Gulf War would have devastating effects on the national economy and the conflict with the Kurds in southeastern Turkey. With increasing European Union demands on Turkish sovereignty and failing faith in their own

¹⁶³ Barany, *Soldier and the Changing State*, 41.

¹⁶⁴ Paul M. Pittman, *Turkey: A Country Study*, 243.

¹⁶⁵ F. Stephen Larrabee, *Turkey as a U.S. Security Partner* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2008), 28.

political and military leadership, political dissatisfaction with the government would reach an all-time high by the turn of the millennium, and would propel the unexpected AKP victory in 2002.

The 1980 coup represents the last time the Turkish military actually took control of the government. The generals of the MGK made clear from the outset that their intention was a full return to electoral civilian control, but not to the status quo that had motivated the military to intervene. To increase the authority of the MGK, recommendations by the body were given “priority” over other considerations by the council of ministers.¹⁶⁶

Some view the 1980 coup as a textbook case of the military engineering their own ability to intervene by creating tension in the state and then deciding on their own how to exit.¹⁶⁷ The election of coup leader Kenan Evren as president was coupled with the passage of the new constitution (and therefore the only way to ensure military transition to civilian control), and gives credence to this position. Alternately, the military had a very legitimate case that their intervention was only necessary in order to prevent further bloodshed and destabilization of the NATO alliance.¹⁶⁸ Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Cold War politics dominated the external threat environment for Turkey and NATO. The Turkish military would use the importance to NATO of a strong Turkey (the second largest force in NATO) in a volatile region as justification for a large and interventionist military.¹⁶⁹ This military was also backed strongly by the United States, whose use of Incirlik Air Base beginning in 1983 led to massive military aid to the TSK, amounting to

¹⁶⁶ F. Stephen Larrabee, *Troubled Partnership: U.S.-Turkish Relations in an Era of Global Geopolitical Change*, (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2010), 103.

¹⁶⁷ Ergun Özbudun, *Contemporary Turkish Politics: Challenges to Democratic Consolidation* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2000), 117.

¹⁶⁸ Hale and Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism*, 81.

¹⁶⁹ Gerassimos Karabelias, *Civil-Military Relations: A Comparative Analysis of the Role of the Military in the Political Transformation of Post-War Turkey and Greece: 1980–1995* (Brussels, Belgium: North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 1998), 39.

\$715 million in 1984 alone and putting Turkey third behind only Israel and Egypt for American support.¹⁷⁰

Initially supportive of the military involvement, years into the military government, society began to agitate for a return to civilian leadership, demonstrating Juan Linz's assertion that legitimacy is a daily grant from society to leadership and cannot exist outside the consensus of individuals.¹⁷¹ Perhaps ironically, the 1980 coup and new constitution did dramatically restrict the ability of leftist organizations and parties to organize and disseminate their positions, effectively killing the Kemalist CHP, which had taken a hard left turn in the preceding decades in order to maintain electoral position.¹⁷²

The remaining years of the 1980s were spent with civilians, under the administration of Turgut Özal, attempting to consolidate their democracy. As Evren's term as president expired in 1989, Özal put himself forward for the office. On October 31, 1989, he was elected president of Turkey, the first without a military background since 1961. When Demirel resumed the office of prime minister in 1991, the overriding sentiment in Turkey was that the time of military intervention had passed, with Demirel himself asserting that neither Turkey nor the world supported an atmosphere that would permit coups.¹⁷³

As the 1990s progressed, however, Turkey again fell into domestic unrest and violence. In August 1992, 300 members of the PKK assaulted the town of Şırnak in the southeast corner of the country, shelling each of the military, the police, and the gendarmerie (quasi-military domestic police). The military leveled the entire city of 25,000 mostly ethnic Kurds in response to the attack. This became the pattern for the next several years, with each side blaming the other for successive increases in violence.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷⁰ Çiğdem Üstün, *Turkey and European Security Defence Policy: Compatibility and Security Cultures in a Globalised World* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2010), 84.

¹⁷¹ Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, eds., *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes: Crisis, Breakdown, & Reequilibration* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), 17.

¹⁷² Ciddi, *Kemalism in Turkish Politics*, 66.

¹⁷³ Hale, *Turkish Politics*, 287.

¹⁷⁴ k tem, *Turkey since 1989*, 89.

The government was shown to be not only unable to effectively govern large portions of the country but also corrupt when, in 1996, a scandal known as Sursurluk was inadvertently exposed following a car accident. The dead included a contract killer/gray wolf, his girlfriend, and the director of the Istanbul police education center. The sole survivor was a Kurdish tribal warlord who doubled as a member of parliament for the Doğru Yol Partisi (True Path Party or DYP). The implications of a wanted contract killer, a member of parliament with his own personal army, and a corrupt police officer in collusion shocked the public.¹⁷⁵

Investigations eventually revealed an assortment of politicians, military members, drug traffickers, organized crime, and domestic terror groups all linked together, and demonstrated to many Turks that theirs was an illusion of a well-run democracy.¹⁷⁶ National Security Policy Documents from the 1990s consistently listed domestic threats such as fundamentalism, separatism, and organized crime.¹⁷⁷ Sursurluk represented each of these and, by tying the very threats to the state to the government itself; the military had cause to exclude their civilian masters from the formulation of national security policy. The combination of pretenses and implications—former Prime Minister (and current Deputy Prime Minister) Tansu Çiller using a parliamentary inquiry as an opportunity to defend the dead Sursurluk passengers as heroes of the state, and the implication (and subsequent resignation) of the Interior Minister Mehmet Ağar in the investigation—further damaged government legitimacy. Post-Sursurluk activism became one of the first civil society movements against the security state that had developed in Turkey from repeated military interventions.¹⁷⁸

The combination of government corruption and the threat to the secular republic from political Islam, proved too much for the military to accept. When Necmettin Erbakan (the first Islamist prime minister) used the office of prime minister as a platform

¹⁷⁵ K. Tem, *Turkey since 1989*, 103.

¹⁷⁶ Jung and Piccoli, *Turkey at the Crossroads*, 112.

¹⁷⁷ Jenkins, *Context and Circumstance*, 48.

¹⁷⁸ Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency (PILDAT), *Civil Military Relations in Turkey: A Quiet Acceptance, a Quiet Challenge* (Lahore, Pakistan: Author, 2008), 13.

for highly symbolic religious behavior in public, the military responded with what has become known as “The February 28 Process,” wherein the military presented Erbakan a list of recommendations intended to deal with anti-secular forces in the country.¹⁷⁹ Erbakan acquiesced to the military demands after brief hesitation.

The military shortly thereafter amended the national security priorities yet again to reflect PKK terrorism and anti-secular activity as chief threats to state security. This permitted the Public Attorney to open an investigation against Erbakan’s Islamist Refah Parti for anti-secular activities. Refah and Erbakan collapsed under the combined pressure. The military had learned to use the prerogatives earned from previous interventions to push out political leadership at odds with the TSK vision for the state. The February 28th Process represented a new dynamic in Turkish civil-military relations: anti-secularism would be staunchly rooted out through use of constitutional institutions apart from the military, and thereby preserve an appearance of non-partisanship on the part of the military.

Following the collapse of Refah in 1997 and the formation of a weak coalitional government after the 1999 elections, the constitutional courts moved to close the conservative heir to Refah, the Felicity Party, for committing actions against the secular state. Refah, however, had not reconstituted itself solely as the Felicity Party but had in fact splintered into two parties, one of which was the conservative Felicity comprised mainly of older RP members. The other faction represented a newer generation of Turkish politicians who believed that open confrontation with secularism and the military was neither necessary nor productive to governance.

This new political party, under the leadership of Istanbul Mayor Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and university professor Abdullah Gül, called itself the Justice and Development Party (AKP), and stormed to office in the 2002 elections, becoming the first Islamist party to ever win an outright majority in the Turkish Parliament by positioning itself as a party loyal to fundamental values and the Turkish constitution.¹⁸⁰ The cause of the split

¹⁷⁹ Mandacı, “Turkey’s Unfinished Transition,” 97.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 104.

was not lost on the future prime minister who, in the immediate aftermath of the 1997 coup, claimed that democracy was “based on free elections and the supremacy of the *elected* government.”¹⁸¹ This sentiment was later echoed by Spanish Defense Minister Narcís Serra, who bluntly observed, “there is no democracy if the military are in charge.”¹⁸²

At the turn of the millennium, Turks saw two very different potential futures begin to diverge from one another. On the one hand was the status quo that had now dominated politics for half a century. On the other hand was the possibility of European Union accession. Growing dissatisfaction with military tutelage, political parties with narrow views working in concert with the military, and a complete failure of politicians to prevent widespread economic suffering contributed to an overwhelming conclusion that the domestic politics were an utter mess. As the military and political parties lost esteem with the average Turk, so too did the policies and ideas that these individuals or institutions advocated. Before changes to the economy, the civil-military relationship, or other institutions of the state could be improved, however, the voters needed a party willing to, at a minimum, challenge the status quo. Out of a general distaste for existing options, the voters would look to a political party led by the man who had helped reform the country’s greatest city as Mayor of Istanbul Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and his appropriately named Justice and Development Party.

G. 2002–2011: CIVILIAN CONTROL BEGINS

On April 27, 2007, the Turkish General Staff issued a memorandum that could be considered a veiled threat of political coup. The 2006 elections had returned the Islamist AKP party to power, and the military had now begun to feel threatened. The memorandum drew a firestorm of criticism from the public, culminating in many street demonstrations rallying to the slogan “neither Sharia nor coup.”¹⁸³ The civilian backlash enabled the AKP to press aggressively against the military establishment. In 2008, Prime

¹⁸¹ Jenny B. White, *Islamist Mobilization in Turkey: A Study in Vernacular Politics* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2002), 166.

¹⁸² Serra, *Military Transition*, 28.

¹⁸³ Larrabee, *Turkey as a U.S. Security Partner*, 32.

Minister and AKP head Recep Tayyip Erdoğan took two actions that would push the military to the brink, first by pressing investigations and eventual indictments against a military conspiracy to overthrow the government (dubbed the Ergenekon movement) and second by moving up elections in part to demonstrate his confidence that the AKP had strong public support.

The percentage of the vote that went to AKP was higher than ever. With this support, the AKP aggressively continued investigation of supposed conspirators to Ergenekon. This perceived persecution of the military, combined with the AKP's continued Islamist tendencies were causal in the decision of the military leadership to offer their resignations in the summer of 2011. Military resignations were a new phenomenon. Whereas the February 28 Process might have previously been initiated by the military, this time no challenge was presented. How then did we arrive at a point where the military was without power to do anything but resign in protest?

In 2002, the AKP did not seek election on a platform of military reform or even as a counterweight to military power in society, but rather as a conservative social party. The early party platform acknowledged the significance of Atatürk to the state and society, and even viewed Kemalism as a vehicle for improving Turkish society.¹⁸⁴ Similarly, the election of the AKP was accepted by the military and newly appointed Chief of General Staff Hilmi Özkök, who acknowledged the results as the will of the people.¹⁸⁵

On the November 10, 2002, anniversary of Atatürk's death, the military took care to remind the people that the Turkish military would continue to protect the people against threats, notably fundamentalism and separatism.¹⁸⁶ From 2002 to 2004, the military and the AKP clashed on policy issues—from headscarves to education prerogatives and the U.S. intervention in Iraq. In each case, both the AKP and the TSK

¹⁸⁴ Gareth Jenkins, "Symbols and Shadow Play: Military-JDP Relations, 2002–2004," in *The Emergence of a New Turkey: Democracy and the AK Parti*, ed. M. Hakan Yavuz (Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah Press, 2006), 189.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 194.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

used media outlets, direct public communications, and official news releases to represent their positions and apply pressure to the other party. In each case, tensions were kept from boiling over by a combination of compromise on the part of the AKP and an unwillingness of the TSK to escalate conflict against a party with such clear political support amongst the voters.

The early years of the AKP-TSK relationship could be considered as guarded, with each strongly representing their own positions in society but unwilling to openly challenge the other. Survival was at stake for the AKP, while the TSK recognized that their own legitimacy was a product of their role above politics. Without a meaningful opposition party to challenge the AKP in parliament, the TSK was disinclined to interfere without significant cause.

The first major changes to the military authority came in 2001 when constitutional amendments were passed; they curtailed the formal position of the TSK in government and the security council, but without significantly diminishing the influence of the military over security policy formulation.¹⁸⁷ Early AKP efforts at reform came in 2003 with the seventh harmonization package that changed the civil-military dynamic in Turkey in several important ways. The general secretary of the Security Council had executive powers removed and replaced with administrative responsibilities, and could now be filled by a civilian (previously only flag officers were eligible). The council itself had its frequency, secrecy, and unfettered access to the internal documents of civilian agencies curtailed. Finally, military courts lost the authority to try civilians in times of peace.

In addition to the European Union harmonization packages, several events stand out as critical junctures in the inversion of control between the military and civilians from 2002 to 2010. These include the re-election of the AKP in 2007, the battle for the presidency in 2007, the constitutional crisis (which resulted from the presidential nomination process), and the Ergenekon investigation into military coup planning. While,

¹⁸⁷ Pavel Daněk, *Changes in Civil-Military Relations in Turkey since the Late 90s: The Consequence of Turkish Preparations for Entry into the EU?* (Saarbrücken, Germany: Lambert Academic Publishing, 2011), 31.

from 2002 to 2006, the relationship between the AKP and TSK was contentious, it has not yet reached adversarial; each party worked to advance their control. From 2006 forward, the military and the AKP both played to win, with winning implying total victory over the other party.

Going into the 2007 presidential elections, the AKP could (by virtue of their absolute majority of parliamentary seats from the 2002 election) nominate anyone of their choosing to the post—the position similar to that of Demirel’s Justice Party in 1966. Unlike 1966, however, the AKP intentionally put forward a candidate directly opposed by the TSK and the Kemalist CHP—Abdullah Gül; both groups rejected the candidate as too religious for the post of president. A constitutional crisis ensued when parliament attempted to prevent the elections from taking place by withholding the necessary quorum.¹⁸⁸ When the AKP was unable to secure the election of Gül, the party took the unusual step of moving forward national elections from 2008 to 2007 (as permitted constitutionally due to parliament deadlock over presidential elections), and forcing a confrontation with opposition parties and the military at the ballot box.

The AKP won historically yet again, this time taking home over 60 percent of parliament seats. Rather than nominating a different candidate, the AKP again put forward Gül. This time the smaller far-right Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi (MHP) refused to boycott the presidential elections and Gül was elected. The loss to the Kemalist CHP and the military were threefold: the presidency went to an Islamist, the AKP was reelected with a larger majority, and the electorate had demonstrated a lack of support for the military position. Convinced that consensual government with opposition parties and the military was no longer feasible, and emboldened by the electoral success and presidential victory, the AKP embarked on programs that would have been impossible just a few years prior.¹⁸⁹ Having used a new constitution as a platform in the 2007 elections, the AKP pushed for constitutional referendums and also moved to lift the ban on headscarves at university, a highly symbolic action guaranteed to challenge the secular military.

¹⁸⁸ Özbudun, *Constitutional System of Turkey*, 140.

¹⁸⁹ Eligür, *Mobilization of Political Islam*, 261.

By 2008, the AKP was in open conflict with the secular state establishment, including the opposition CHP and the TSK. In 2008, a closure case was brought to the Turkish Constitutional Court seeking the dissolution of the AKP as a political party and the imposition of five-year political bans for 71 members. The move fell one vote short of success, but succeeded in confirming for the AKP their position that there would eventually be one winner in the conflict between the party and the military/secularist forces.

Concurrently to the actions against the AKP, the Ergenekon investigation was gathering steam, focusing on military officers, organized crime, businesses, journalists, and even artists charged with plotting a coup against the AKP. If Sursurluk forced people to question the security-government nexus, then the discovery of a cache of grenades in the seaside port of Trabzon, which initiated the Ergenekon investigation, called into question the very integrity of the military establishment.¹⁹⁰ Similarly, in June 2007, police raided the domicile of a retired officer in Istanbul and discovered another cache of 27 hand grenades.¹⁹¹ With mounting evidence, in July 2008, prosecutors issued a 2,455-page indictment of coup plots against Erdoğan's government. By 2012, Ergenekon had grown into 16 different court cases with nearly 300 suspects on trial for participation in anti-government movements, most prominently the Action Plan Against Reactionaryism.¹⁹²

From 2008 to 2012, as the trials played out in court, the AKP and supporters fought the security establishment and their supporters over the veracity and authenticity of the coup allegations. The original Ergenekon flourished into investigations into coups both real and imagined as far back as living coup plotters could be found. In April 2012, former President Kenan Evren himself was put on trial, alongside another top former commander, for initiating the 1980 coup. On the day before the 16th anniversary of the

¹⁹⁰ Oktem, *Turkey since 1989*, 161.

¹⁹¹ Michael Rubin, "Erdogan, Ergenekon, and the Struggle for Turkey," *Mideast Monitor*, August 8, 2008, 4.

¹⁹² "256 Suspects Tried in Merged Ergenekon Trial," *Today's Zaman*, May 7, 2012, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-279673-256-suspects-tried-in-merged-ergenekon-trial.html>.

February 28, 1997 coup, Ankara prosecutors arrested five former military generals for their role in the intervention.

Debate over the veracity of the claims was put to rest in February 2013 when internal documents from the Turkish General Staff submitted to the 13th High Criminal Court confirmed the prosecution's allegations that a military-backed plan had launched a campaign to undermine the AKP and religious social movements in the country.¹⁹³ The five-year trial ended in August 2013, with dozens of guilty verdicts returned for mostly retired flag officers, many of who received lifetime sentences.

As in 2011, when the top generals had no recourse except resignation when protesting the investigation itself, in the aftermath of the Ergenekon verdict, the military was eerily muted. The first official statement from the TSK read, "We, the TSK, believe—as required by our respect for the rule of law—that the trial will be concluded in a fair manner within boundaries of the principle of fair trials."¹⁹⁴ After the prime minister accepted the mass resignations by the General Staff in 2011, the TSK leadership had nothing left in the aftermath of 2013 coup verdicts except more resignation, this time to civilian authority.

Previous estimations that Turkish civil-military relations had grown beyond the coup stage have proven incorrect. However, with lifetime sentences for former military commanders, indictments against former presidents of the Republic (even the military never moved against the president), and complete acquiescence of the military to the new hierarchy, it is safe to state that the civilians have effectively consolidated their control. This then returns us to the question: What changed? What would allow the AKP to accomplish such a complete reversal against such an entrenched interest?

¹⁹³ Göksel Genç, "Evidence Sent to Court by Military Confirms Coup Plot," *'s Zaman*, February 21, 2013, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-307758-evidence-sent-to-court-by-military-confirms-coup-plot.html>.

¹⁹⁴ "Turkish Military Stresses Rule of Law in Wake of Ergenekon Verdicts," *Today's Zaman*, August 6, 2013, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-322945-turkish-military-stresses-rule-of-law-in-wake-of-ergenekon-verdicts.html>.

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III. FORMAL CONTROL: ELECTORAL COMPETITION IN TURKEY, 2002–2006

From 2002 through 2006, the Turkish Grand National Assembly approved multiple reforms that vastly expanded formal civilian control over the military. These reforms, which affected a broad swath of military privileges, were carried out in stages: constitutional reforms that provided general guidelines to government institutions led to reforms to the legal codes that govern governmental institutions—most importantly, changes to the laws governing the National Security Council. Together these reforms enabled compliance with European Union harmonization packages.¹⁹⁵ Harmonization packages address areas of Turkish civil-military relations incompatible with EU *acquis communautaire*, the collection of laws, rulings, and policies aimed at ensuring the four freedoms of the EU: goods, services, capital, and persons.¹⁹⁶

How can the extent of these changes be reconciled with the fact that a vigilant Turkish Armed Forces previously had not allowed the Justice and Development Party (AKP) maneuvering room on most issues?¹⁹⁷ How did the AKP achieve such reforms when other parties had been unable to do so? This second question is particularly interesting given that during the reform period, the neophyte political party, which had been created from members of a political party banned just a year before the 2002 national elections, was being led by Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, a devout Muslim banned

¹⁹⁵ Harmonization packages are collection of reforms, new laws, or amendments to existing law that “harmonize” a candidate with EU standards. While the focus in this essay is on those changes that increased civilian control of the armed forces, harmonization packages include everything from environmental law to human rights to banking regulations, all of which must align with EU norms. Harmonization is what sustains the *acquis communautaire* freedoms.

¹⁹⁶ Philippe C. Schmitter, *How to Democratize the European Union—and Why Bother?* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000), 19.

¹⁹⁷ “AK Party Faces Challenge from Military after Elections,” *Hurriyet Daily News*, November 6, 2002, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/ak-party-faces-challenge-from-military-after-elections.aspx?pageID=438&n=ak-party-faces-challenge-from-military-after-elections-2002-11-06>.

from participating in the elections, during which he underwent investigations by the constitutional court.¹⁹⁸

This chapter provides evidence supporting the hypothesis that electoral competition can explain the increase in formal control of the military during 2002–2006. Beginning with the 2002 national elections that swept the AKP into office and concluding prior to the 2007 national elections, the electoral competition hypothesis can explain how the civilian government was able to achieve, through legislation, formal control of the military, in the form of National Security Council (MGK) reforms, constitutional reforms, and the European Union Harmonization Packages.

The first section of this chapter presents the background and assumptions of electoral competition regarding Turkey under the AKP, including the incentive structure that electoral competition uses to explain changes in civil-military relations, and the actual election results and voting patterns in Turkey. The second section describes how the various programmatic and particularistic incentives of electoral competition increased the ability of the AKP to exert formal control over the Armed Forces by increasing public support and legitimacy for the government. Meanwhile, the European Union acted as a catalyst for political reform alongside these incentives, a dynamic also analyzed in the second section. The third and final section discusses the reforms themselves, specifically how changes to the MGK and the constitution, and the passage of harmonization packages, increased formal control over the Turkish Armed Forces.

A. ELECTORAL COMPETITION AND TURKISH ELECTION RESULTS, 1999–2004

While both types of incentives increase politicians' chances of winning additional elections, they also have the potential to challenge a politically active military in a post-transition setting, especially if the military controls the transition to democracy, as in the Turkish case on multiple instances and most recently in 1997 with the February 28 Process. Programmatic incentives that increase political participation, advocate social

¹⁹⁸ Yavuz Baydar, "Dances with the Wolves," *Hurriyet Daily News*, November 1, 2002, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/dances-with-the-wolves.aspx?pageID=438&n=dances-with-the-wolves-2002-11-01>.

mobilization, or seek to change fundamentally the political status quo directly challenge the TSK and allied political parties.

If by pursuing the policies necessary to survive politically, politicians also challenge a politically active military, such as the TSK, how then do politicians—or their party—succeed in the face of entrenched military interests? Hunter proposes that, while electoral competition creates the incentives to challenge the military, it is election results that enable the politicians to overcome the military.¹⁹⁹ The magnitude and the nature of an electoral victory become important because the military will be disinclined to risk its position against a government with strong political support: “the greater the mandate a government enjoys, the less likely military elites will be to work aggressively to offset civilian attempts to diminish their political standing.”²⁰⁰ After repeated wins in elections, the results become cumulative, granting a political party stronger voter support and greater latitude to enact reforms over the military.²⁰¹

In the 2002 elections, the AKP won outright control of parliament and the right to form a government without a coalition of parties. The AKP margin of victory enabled government unity that, in turn, allowed the party to pursue policies beneficial to and demanded by the public (that is, programmatic incentives), while also using resources to build and maintain personal networks (i.e., particularistic incentives) without support from the opposition Republican People’s Party (CHP). These efforts created additional public support for the politicians in future elections. The AKP won more votes than opposition political parties in national elections in 2004, 2007, 2009, and 2011. This growth of support made it difficult for the armed forces to openly challenge military reforms instituted by the AKP.

An additional prediction arises based on the logic of electoral competition, as we would expect it to play out in the Turkish context. As shifting voting patterns increase

¹⁹⁹ Hunter, “Reason, Culture, or Structure?,” 44.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

²⁰¹ Paul Pierson, “Big, Slow-Moving, And ... Invisible: Macrosocial Processes in the Study of Comparative Politics,” in *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*, ed. James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 181.

AKP support, each successive election won by the political party should increase the power of and expand the ability of the government to push for greater incentives and eventually, additional military concessions. While this chapter focuses on the 2002–2007 period, the cyclical nature of electoral competition and the increased ability of politicians to exert control over the military became even more pronounced in the period of contestation from 2007 to 2011, as discussed in Chapter IV. In this Turkish civil-military relations study, this cycle culminates in 2011 with the mass resignation of the chiefs of staff in response to the ongoing Ergenekon investigations into military coup plots against the government.

The data presented in Figure 2 supports the prediction that voter affiliation will shift and follow incentives by showing vote allocation according to party in each of the 1999, 2002, and 2004 (local) elections. This voter support reflects support for policies reducing military power and provided a bulwark against significant TSK incursions into politics from 2002 to 2006, while also allowing for increasing formal reforms of the military through the aforementioned constitutional, MGK, and harmonization package legislation.

Turkish political parties and share of national vote

Political Party (with Turkish abbreviation)	1999 (national)	2002 (national)	2004 (local)
Virtue Party (FP)	15.41		
Felicity Party (SP)		2.49	4.02
Justice and Development Party (AKP)		34.28	41.67
National Action Party (MHP)	17.98	8.36	10.45
Republican People's Party (CHP)	8.71	19.39	18.23
Democratic Left Party (DSP)	22.19	1.22	2.12
True Path Party (DYP) Coalition	12.01	9.54	9.97
Motherland Party (ANAP)	13.22	5.13	2.5
Other Parties	10.48	19.59	11.04

Notes: percentages in **bold** indicate that the party crossed the 10% threshold necessary to receive seats in parliament.

Virtue was banned in 2001 and became the AKP and Felicity as discusses in chapter 2. "Other Parties" includes all parties that failed to cross the 10% threshold in any national election. The 2004 election were for members of the Provincial General Councils which has no minimum threshold.

Sources: Data provided by the Turkish Statistical Institute. www.turkstat.gov.tr

Figure 2. Turkish election results 1999–2004²⁰²

²⁰² Table by the author, source data provided by the Turkish Statistical Institute, accessed February 17, 2014, <http://www.turkstat.gov.tr>.

Between 1999 and 2004, Turkey experienced a significant realignment of voters towards two parties and away from the multi-party electorate that had reigned since 1983. In 2002, the center-left parties received a mere 20 percent of the vote (and no parliamentary representation), with many voters shifting their allegiance to the CHP.²⁰³ Similarly, the center-right parties that dominated the 1980s and 1990s (Motherland Party [ANAP] and DYP) also faded, evidencing a significant realignment of the electorate as voters coalesced around two parties of different ideological origins.²⁰⁴ While showing a substantial rebuke of establishment political parties in the national election, Figure 1 also illustrates that even at the local level, in 2004, voters chose to be represented largely by the two major parties elected in 2002.

1. 1999 General Elections

In the 1999 contest, voters cast ballots for twenty political parties, five of which received the necessary 10 percent minimum to earn seats in parliament. Those that did garner enough votes for representation included the Democratic Left Party (ideologically Kemalist and advocating social democracy and receiving 22 percent of the votes), the Nationalist Movement Party (representing the far-right nationalist electorate and receiving 18 percent of votes cast), Virtue Party (Islamist descendent of Welfare and receiving 15 percent of votes cast), Motherland Party (representing economic liberalism, social conservatism, and Turkish nationalism and receiving 13 percent of votes cast), and True Path Party (also economic liberals but social conservatives and receiving 12 percent of votes cast). These parties represented an electorate fractured across the country and thus unable to form a strong government from 1999 to 2002.

With the February 28 Process still fresh, the 1999 Virtue Party election campaign attempted to revise the historical narrative of the country, arguing that true republicanism (and therefore true loyalty to Atatürk) meant a commitment to citizen government, with

²⁰³ "Collapse in Center-Left," *Hurriyet Daily News*, November 5, 2002, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/collapse-in-center-left.aspx?pageID=438&n=collapse-in-center-left-2002-11-05>.

²⁰⁴ Ali T. Akarca and Cem Başlevent, "Persistence in Regional Voting Patterns in Turkey During a Period of Major Political Realignment," *European Urban and Regional Studies* 18, no. 2 (2011), 186.

civilians accountable to the people and, by correlation, the military to the civilians.²⁰⁵ Campaign posters included the slogan “The Republic is Virtue” and, as Atatürk himself made the original statement in the early years of the nation, the signature of Atatürk was scrawled below the motto.²⁰⁶ Pre-election General Staff messages stressed the military’s continued interest in fighting Islamic fundamentalism (clearly aimed at Virtue and reminding voters and politicians alike what happened to Welfare).²⁰⁷

In June 2001, the Constitutional Court found the Virtue Party guilty of violating the secular principles of the constitution and banned the party after a female Member of Parliament (Merve Kavakcı) refused to remove her headscarf during her swearing-in ceremony.²⁰⁸ The ban of Virtue a mere three years after the dissolution of Welfare (and under similar circumstances) demonstrated that the military and secular allies maintained tight control over acceptable political behavior heading into the 2002 national elections.²⁰⁹

2. The 2002 and 2004 Local Elections

Figure 1 also demonstrates the shift in votes between 1999 and 2002, from establishment parties to the AKP and CHP. The largely Kurdish southeastern Turkey was the only region to maintain political support for the same party in both 1999 and 2002. The sparse population, however, could not propel Kurdish candidates over the 10 percent threshold. Pre-election day polling showed that the AKP was likely going to be the top

²⁰⁵ Eligür, *Mobilization of Political Islam*, 236.

²⁰⁶ Esra Özyürek, *Nostalgia for the Modern: State Secularism and Everyday Politics in Turkey* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006), 106.

²⁰⁷ Heinz Kramer, *A Changing Turkey: The Challenge to Europe and the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 2000), 32.

²⁰⁸ M. Hakan Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 75.

²⁰⁹ In addition to the closure of the party President Sezer and Prime Minister Ecevit later accused Kavakcı of intentional provocation, which resulted in her losing Turkish citizenship.

vote earner, with the CHP behind them, and two more additional parties passing the 10 percent threshold.²¹⁰

Voters ultimately supported the two parties not tarred by the failures of the previous coalition partners, and expectations that the AKP and CHP would be forced into a coalition government were high. In reality, the actual results were so overwhelmingly in favor of AKP that Turkish journalist Mehmet Ali Birand declared the results a “civilian coup,” insisting that the election was less a ringing endorsement of the AKP than a popular rebellion against the political class.²¹¹ Just 48 hours after the election, Birand appeared to foreshadow the role electoral competition would play in the coming years when cautioning the AKP to remain within the secular system, predicting that doing so would “bolster the AKP’s credibility. And, to the extent that it bolsters its credibility, it will be able to extend its time in power.”²¹²

In 2002, over eighteen political parties and several independent politicians earned votes in the national election, but only the victorious AKP and the opposition CHP exceeded the minimum threshold. The general outrage at government over the previous tumultuous three years (when combined with the entire decade of poor governance throughout the 1990s) resulted in 35 percent of the vote being shared across the four major parties (Virtue having been banned) from the 1999 election, none of which earned seats in parliament.²¹³ A full 90 percent of incumbent members of parliament lost their

²¹⁰ Esra Erduran, “AKP Supporters Overjoyed, CHP Grassroots Disappointed,” *Hurriyet Daily News*, November 5, 2002, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/akp-supporters-overjoyed-chp-grassroots-disappointed.aspx?pageID=438&n=akp-supporters-overjoyed-chp-grassroots-disappointed-2002-11-05>.

²¹¹ Mehmet Ali Birand, “This is a Civilian Coup,” *Hurriyet Daily News*, November 5, 2002, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/this-is-a-civilian-coup.aspx?pageID=438&n=this-is-a-civilian-coup-2002-11-05>.

²¹² Ibid.

²¹³ Menderes Çinar, “Explaining the Popular Appeal and Durability of the Justice and Development Party in Turkey,” in *Negotiating Political Power in Turkey: Breaking up the Party*, ed. Élise Massicard and Nicole F. Watts (New York: Routledge, 2013), 43. Shortly after the euphoria of the Öcalan capture and the 1999 elections, confidence in government plummeted following multiple calamitous government failures. The first of these was the August 1999 earthquake which killed an estimated 40,000 people (official numbers were never accurately determined) and that the government was completely unresponsive to. From 2000 to 2001, a series of financial crisis gripped the government that saw massive currency devaluations, and led to an altercation between the President and Prime Minister wherein the former was caught on camera hurling a copy of the constitution at the latter.

seats and Turks anticipated a more stable government with the formulation of the first two-party parliament since 1948.²¹⁴

In the final tally, the AKP won 363 out of 555 seats (almost exactly two-thirds) with 34 percent of the votes, while the CHP won 178 seats (the remaining total and almost exactly one-third) with 19 percent of the total votes cast. Despite only receiving slightly over one-third of all votes cast, Turkish apportionment gave the AKP not just a large margin of victory but the ability to form a unified government with an unprecedented majority. Single-party government would (as electoral competition predicts) give the AKP significant leverage to pursue those programmatic and particularistic incentives necessary to secure their political standing and prolong the life of the party, while simultaneously protecting against military incursions into politics.

Publicly, the TSK and Chief of General Staff Hilmi Özkök maintained that the military would “protect the Republic against every kind of threat, particularly fundamentalism and separatism.” In light of the overwhelming election results, however, the military privately recognized that movement against the AKP without provocation by the civilians (violations of secularism or threats to do so) was unfeasible. Özkök further observed that the 2002 national elections were “very much in line with democratic norms. Results reflect what our people wish and I respect this.”²¹⁵

The March 2004 local elections confirmed and solidified the position of the AKP as the preeminent political party of choice. While no members of parliament were up for election, voters from over 3,000 villages, towns, and cities voted for the AKP in higher numbers even than the historic 2002 elections, roughly 42 percent. Also up for election were the city council seats of all 81 Turkish provinces. The Kemalist CHP received roughly 19 percent of the vote and no other parties achieved significant percentages. An electoral map of the 2004 vote reveals that the AKP was preferred regardless of geographic location. The AKP won in urban areas (Istanbul, Adana, and capital Ankara

²¹⁴ Oktem, *Turkey since 1989*, 123.

²¹⁵ “Ozkok Says Respect Election Results,” *Hurriyet Daily News*, November 6, 2002, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/ozkok-says-respect-election-results.aspx?pageID=438&n=ozkok-says-respect-election-results-2002-11-06>.

all went AKP) and rural areas (the Anatolian heartland). Even in traditional Kurdish areas the AKP won more seats than the Kurdish Democratic People's Party.

The region of Urfa in southeastern Turkey on the Syrian border is a useful anecdote on the growth in support for the AKP. In 1999, the region went solidly for the party it always had, the True Path Party (DYP). In 2002, the DYP failed to cross the threshold and the Kurdish Democratic People's Party represented Urfa. In the 2004 local elections, however, Urfa went to the AKP. The results of the 2004 election are all the more telling because there is no minimum threshold for regional government, meaning the party that ends up representing a district is the party that received the most votes in said district.

There is one remaining decision made by the Turkish parliament that also would be fresh in the mind of voters driving them to support the AKP, the decision by parliament to deny the U.S. military a northern front in the 2003 invasion of Iraq. The Turkish GNAT rejected the U.S. request by a vote of 264 in favor of and 250 against the invasion. Turkish parliamentary proceedings, however, require a motion to receive a majority of votes cast, and 19 abstentions meant that the American request fell three votes short.²¹⁶ The denial was influenced by the aftermath of the 1991 Gulf War, which cost the Turks billions in lost foreign trade from Iraq and contributed to the economic difficulties during the 1990s.²¹⁷

Aside from economic losses, the Turks also feared that an unstable Iraq would unleash greater terrorist activity from the Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK) and threaten territorial sovereignty.²¹⁸ This assessment was correct. From 2003 onward, the TSK faced rapid escalation of terrorist activity in southeastern Turkey, with the PKK formally

²¹⁶ Philip H. Gordon and Omer Taspinar, *Winning Turkey: How America, Europe, and Turkey Can Revive a Fading Partnership* (Washington, DC: Brookings, 2008), 31.

²¹⁷ While the U.S. offered Turkey \$6 billion in assistance that could produce \$24 billion in loans, a similar offer was made prior to the Gulf War. After the 1992 U.S. presidential election, however, the aid was cancelled and the funds promised went to the "peace dividend."

²¹⁸ Ioannis N. Grigoriadis, "Friends No More? The Rise of Anti-American Nationalism in Turkey," *Middle East Journal* 64, no. 1 (2010), 62.

taking up arms again in 2004 after a brief cease-fire.²¹⁹ The growing view that the U.S. was not concerned with Turkish security led the Turkish voters to look unfavorably on U.S. requests for a northern front; therefore, as the party in power, the AKP benefitted from the appearance of a strong government willing to stand up to outside interests.²²⁰

These factors contributed to yet another electoral success for the AKP. The electoral competition hypothesis would predict that, following a second decisive victory wherein the only opposition party of consequence (CHP) received an even smaller share of the vote, the winning party would be emboldened to pursue even greater programmatic and particularistic incentives, pushing for more political support. This is in fact exactly what happened. The 2004 local elections increased the legitimacy of the AKP government by demonstrating a wider level of political support than that received in 2002. Because of the threshold requirements for parliamentary seats, roughly 45 percent of votes cast in 2002 went to parties that failed to earn representation in the Grand National Assembly, giving AKP critics the ability to assert a lack of broad consensus. The 2004 local elections helped refute these allegations by demonstrating that the AKP was in fact increasing political support and broadening their appeal through the effective use of programmatic and particularistic incentives.

The presence of Özkök in the Chief of General Staff position was a boon for AKP–TSK relations following the 2002 elections. Appointed in August 2002, Özkök represented a unique officer in the role of chief, one who was personally a devout Muslim.²²¹ While Özkök would never have earned the office were he not also a strong Kemalist and advocate of a secular Turkey, his personal piety allowed a more muted response to the election of the AKP. In turn, this helped the military adopt a “wait and see” mentality rather than an aggressive defense of Kemalism without first determining the level of challenge that the AKP would present.²²²

²¹⁹ Larrabee, *Turkey as a U.S. Security Partner*, 8.

²²⁰ Giray Sadik, *American Image in Turkey: U.S. Foreign Policy Dimensions* (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2009), 12.

²²¹ Jenkins, *Political Islam in Turkey*, 170.

²²² Ibid.

B. PARTICULARISTIC AND PROGRAMMATIC INCENTIVES

Because so many political parties failed to pass the 10 percent threshold for parliamentary representation, nearly 45 percent of all votes cast went unrepresented in the Turkish Grand National Assembly (GNAT) following the 2002 election. The AKP would have to govern with the awareness that nearly half of all votes failed to receive representation. The party addressed this issue by promoting policies and reforms that benefitted society as a whole rather than just the AKP constituency. One such example was the International Monetary Fund (IMF) reforms initiated by previous governments, which the AKP inherited once elected. Despite fears that IMF requirements would harm the rural Turkish voter, IMF support was essential in order to improve the domestic economy, and the AKP maintained the IMF reforms.

Programmatic incentives include the anti-corruption Urgent Action Plan, the 2004 Law of Associations, and the Diyanet and IMF reforms, all aimed at increasing political support by implementing political policies the public desired.²²³ Particularistic incentives designed to distribute resources to friendly political constituencies include hiring new imams and targeting the defense industry and TSK funding streams. Though not every AKP policy or legal reform is included in this section, many major policies are, and the nature and success of these policies demonstrate a party committed to survival, and successful in increasing electoral support. Moreover, each of these represents a challenge to military autonomy. IMF reforms demanded austerity measures which meant reduced military spending, changes to the Diyanet and education system meant diverting resources and reducing the military oversight role on these issues, and changes to the Law of Associations also meant reduced military oversight of civil society.

1. Anti-Corruption Programmatic Incentives: Urgent Action Plan

Voter demand for a corruption-free government meant that strong AKP policies to combat irresponsible government enacted by the AKP would likely lead to increased support, and was a staple of both the AKP election platform and the platforms of previous conservative parties. Since the Welfare Party government in 1996, anti-corruption

²²³ European Commission, "Eurobarometer 62: Public Opinion in the European Union," 2.

measures have been a staple of conservative party politics in Turkey.²²⁴ The 2002 AKP Election Manifesto included promises to fight bribery and corruption, both legislatively and in the courts.²²⁵ The implementation by the AKP of the Urgent Action Plan in November 2002 sought to leverage soft and hard measures to combat corruption and improve the Turkish economy.²²⁶ Between 2002 and 2006, the AKP passed three key legal reforms or updates to laws aimed at combating government corruption, a chronic complaint of the Turkish electorate. Together, these three initiatives demonstrated the party's awareness that voter anger over political corruption played a major part in sweeping the AKP into power.²²⁷

The first policy targeting public administration reform and corruption was the 2003 Law on the Right to Information, which provided the public an avenue to request information from all “public institutions and the professional organizations which qualify them as public institutions.”²²⁸ When the Official Gazette published the law in 2004, the official release message delivered by the Office of the Prime Minister emphasized the importance of public access to government information as an essential component to transparent government. The law applied to all ministerial officials, the governor, and local authorities. This law also challenged military autonomy by demanding that military documents as well be made accessible to public requests, similar to U.S. Freedom of Information Act requests.

The most important policy initiative to focus on corruption was the creation of the Council of Ethics for Public Service (CEPS), established within the office of the Prime

²²⁴ White, *Islamist Mobilization in Turkey*, 119.

²²⁵ Işek Gürleyen, “What Did They Promise for Democracy and What Did They Deliver?: The AKP and the CHP 2002–11,” in *Turkey's Democratization Process*, ed. Carmen Rodríguez, et al. (New York: Routledge, 2014), 33.

²²⁶ Üğür mürgönülşen and Alan Doig, “Why the Gap? Turkey, EU Accession, Corruption and Culture,” *Turkish Studies* 13, no. 1 (2012), 12.

²²⁷ “Turks Vote for Change with AKP,” *Hurriyet Daily News*, November 5, 2002, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turks-vote-for-change-with-akp.aspx?pageID=438&n=turks-vote-for-change-with-akp-2002-11-05>.

²²⁸ Turkish Parliament, *Turkish Law on the Right to Information, Law No: 4982*, (Ankara, Turkey: Author, 2003), Section 2, http://www.bilgiedinmehakki.org/en/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=7&Itemid=8.

Minister in 2004, by Law No. 5176, specifically to fight corruption of public officials. CEPS was created to be both proactive and reactive, having the authority to investigate allegations of corruption and the responsibility to embed ethical culture in government employees by using a combination of seminars, academic studies, and public ethics training programs.²²⁹ Empowered by the Code of Ethics that entered into effect in 2005, CEPS has the authority to post calls for witnesses and supporting evidence through the Official Gazette.²³⁰ As an initial effort, CEPS proved a significant step towards reducing corruption. However, it is worth noting that because only designated public officials are subordinated to the Code of Ethics—with the legislature, universities, judiciary, and armed forces conspicuously absent—and because of serious resource constraints, CEPS' power has been limited to date.²³¹

An additional anti-corruption measure was the Regulation on the Principles of Ethical Behavior of Public Officials (Regulation 25785) that became effective in April 2005. This regulation was an outgrowth of CEPS and consisted of 42 articles that strictly defined the boundaries of ethical public service, including provisions on conflict of interests, the illegality of benefiting from public office, and transparency.²³² Several of the articles focus on the role of public officials as servants of the community, the accountability of the public official to the taxpayer, and impartiality of government employees before the citizens. Together the three initiatives of the Urgent Action Plan brought increased oversight of government officials and corruption, issues of importance to the voters needed by the AKP to continue in office.

2. Civil Society Programmatic Incentive: 2004 Law of Associations

Ioannis Grigoriadis contends that civil society is “one of the most accurate indicators of the existence of a substantive, participatory democracy. A high degree of

²²⁹ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – MENA, “The Council of Ethics for Public Service” (N.p.: Author, 2011).

²³⁰ mürğönülşen and Doig, “Why the Gap?” 104.

²³¹ Ibid.

²³² Council of Ethics for Public Service (CEPS), “Regulation on the Principles of Ethical Behavior of the Public Officials and Application Procedures and Essentials,” ed. CEPS – Office of the Prime Minister (Ankara, Turkey, 2005).

citizen participation in civil society associations is positively correlated with a flourishing democratic system.”²³³ Turkish civil society has historically been stunted by a focus on security over democracy in the public sphere.²³⁴ Where the military maintain this status quo, civil society itself becomes the battleground.²³⁵ The primary means of military repression of civil society was to require that citizens subject themselves to government monitoring and supervision.²³⁶ A series of weak governments and lopsided civil-society, with pro-Kemalist organizations able to operate while reformist groups were monitored or shut down, was unable to effect change on those discourses set by the military.²³⁷

In 2004, the AKP passed a new Law of Associations that prevented security forces from entering meetings of private organizations without a court order, and also abolished the previous requirement that civil society organizations notify government officials of the date, time, and location of meetings and invite a government official to said meetings.²³⁸ These restrictions had been previously implemented by the military following the 1980 coup and were designed to limit political activity.²³⁹ Following the AKP reforms, records from the Ministry of Interior Affairs showed increases in civil society organizations from 2002 through 2006. Following the 2002 elections, Turkey went from approximately 61,000 voluntary associations to 73,378 by 2006, an increase of over 20 percent in four years.²⁴⁰

²³³ Ioannis N. Grigoriadis, *Trials of Europeanization: Turkish Political Culture and the European Union* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 42.

²³⁴ E. Fuat Keyman and Tuba Kanci, “Democratic Consolidation and Civil Society in Turkey,” in *Turkey’s Democratization Process*, ed. Carmen Rodríguez, et al. (New York: Routledge, 2014), 145.

²³⁵ Ümit Cizre, “A New Politics of Engagement: The Turkish Military, Society, and the AKP,” in *Democracy, Islam, and Secularism in Turkey*, ed. Ahmet T. Kuru and Alfred Stepan (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 143.

²³⁶ Gülgün Erdoğan-Tosun, “Civil Society and Democratic Consolidation in Turkey,” in *Democratic Consolidation in Turkey: State, Political Parties, Civil Society, Civil-Military Relations, Socio-Economic Development, EU, Rise of Political Islam, and Separatist Kurdish Nationalism*, ed. Müge Aknur (Boca Raton, FL: Universal, 2012), 198.

²³⁷ Bill Park, *Modern Turkey: People, State, and Foreign Policy in a Globalised World* (Oxon, United Kingdom: Routledge, 2011), 36.

²³⁸ The International Center for Non-Profit Law, “GO Law Monitor: Turkey,” last modified July 3, 2014, <http://www.icnl.org/research/monitor/turkey.html>.

²³⁹ Daniella Kuzmanovic, *Refractions of Civil Society in Turkey* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 10.

²⁴⁰ Keyman and Kanci, “Democratic Consolidation and Civil,” 146.

Many of these new organizations were created to fulfill religious purposes, providing the AKP with additional support networks (as the recognized party of Islamic values voters) without a similar increase in civil society organizations targeting the AKP.²⁴¹ In these cases, the programmatic incentives proved beneficial by providing policies that increased the opportunity for organizations to gather, facilitate party support, electoral campaigns, political parties, and lobbying for issues.

Laws expanding the ability of voters to organize and advocate can also benefit politicians when these policies improve the citizens' view of their government, specifically the party in government. Many Turks desire to participate in civil society organizations but cite state interference, more accurately military interference and monitoring as a major hindrance.²⁴² Ali Çarkoğlu and Cerim Cenker conclude that in addition to opportunity, citizens' "perceptions of the political and economic system are also significant determinants of civil society involvement."²⁴³

3. Political Islam Particularistic and Programmatic Incentives: Diyanet and Imams

Despite the fact that the AKP has consistently marketed itself as a conservative party rather than Islamic, Turkish religious voters overwhelmingly support the AKP. Therefore, either an increase in conservatism or religious freedoms in Turkey would benefit the AKP.²⁴⁴ Turkish society has grown in conservatism since the mid-1990s, as the leftist parties of the 1970s and 1980s lost voter support.²⁴⁵ However, while Turkish society has moved away from leftist parties or politics towards more conservative

²⁴¹ CIVICUS and Third Sector Foundation of Turkey (TUSEV), *Civil Society in Turkey: An Era of Transition, CIVICUS Civil Society Index Report for Turkey* ed. Filiz Bikmen and Seynep Meydanoğlu (Istanbul, Turkey: Author, 1997), 15.

²⁴² CIVICUS and TUSEV, *Civil Society in Turkey*, 16.

²⁴³ Ali Çarkoğlu and Cerim I. Cenker, "On the Relationship between Democratic Institutionalization and Civil Society Involvement: New Evidence from Turkey," *Democratization* 18, no. 3 (2011), 763.

²⁴⁴ Birol A. Yeşilada and Peter Oordijk, "Changing Values in Turkey: Religiosity and Tolerance in Comparative Perspective," in *Islamization of Turkey under the AKP Rule*, ed. Birol A. Yeşilada and Barry Rubin (New York: Routledge, 2011), 23.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 22.

politicians, society itself has not statistically grown more Islamic.²⁴⁶ While taking care to avoid the image of being an Islamic political party (to deter military threats against the party), the AKP is led by pious Muslims, counts on political support from the Islamic voter, and pursues policies designed to increase this voter support, especially those granting Muslims freedom to practice religion apart from government interference.

The violence and factionalism of the 1970s led the military to the conclusion that Islam could be used to provide common identity and deter political violence.²⁴⁷ Following the 1980 coup, the TSK and secular elites attempted to bring Islam into the political fold through the Turkish-Islamic Synthesis.²⁴⁸ While Islamic displays of faith or piety are discouraged at official Republic functions, the state still runs public Islamic schools, requires education in Islam, and, through the Directorate of Religious Affairs / Diyanet, maintains all Turkish Imams on the public payroll.²⁴⁹ The Diyanet is a controversial institution and a prerogative of secularism in Turkey, protected by the Law of Political Parties, which makes illegal any political proposal to abolish the Diyanet.²⁵⁰ Since the inception of the Republic the Diyanet has maintained absolute control over appointments of all religious functionaries down to village prayer leaders, thereby providing oversight to preserve secularism as a national value.²⁵¹ The origin and continuation of the Diyanet demonstrate the top-down nature of Turkish secularism, imposed from above rather than being a natural product of Turkish democracy.²⁵²

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

²⁴⁷ Muzaffer Ercan Yilmaz, "The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey: The Case of the Welfare Party," *Turkish Studies* 13, no. 3 (2012), 373.

²⁴⁸ The Turkish-Islamic Synthesis began in 1983 and was an attempt to use Islam to prevent the partisan violence that defined the 1970s in Turkey.

²⁴⁹ Ahmet T. Kuru, *Secularism and State Policies toward Religion: The United States, France, and Turkey* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 166.

²⁵⁰ Turkish Parliament, *Law of Political Parties, 89th Article; no. 2820* (Ankara, Turkey, GNAT 1982).

²⁵¹ Mohammed Ayoob, *The Many Faces of Political Islam: Religion and Politics in the Muslim World* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2008), 99.

²⁵² Ahmet T. Kuru and Alfred Stepan, "Laïcité as an 'Ideal Type' and a Continuum: Comparing Turkey, France, and Senegal," in *Democracy, Islam, and Secularism in Turkey*, Alfred, Religion, Culture, and Public Life (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 104.

From 2002 through 2006, the AKP made several attempts to provide incentives organized around political Islam that would increase the opportunities for Muslims to participate in the public sphere. These policy initiatives could increase AKP leverage over the TSK by solidifying the conservative base of the AKP while the party pursued other less popular incentives such as IMF reforms opposed by their political base. In 2003, the AKP sought to hire an additional 15,000 imams to service the approximately 22,000 mosques without a prayer leader.²⁵³ A provision for mosques in each multi-family residential building, introduced by the AKP in conjunction with the sixth EU reform package, was also pushed, but defeated by a combination of secular forces including media, military, and judicial advocates.²⁵⁴

In 2004, Erdoğan made two separate attempts to reduce or eliminate restrictions on the headscarves in educational institutions, both of which were challenged and withdrawn shortly thereafter.²⁵⁵ On the defeat, Erdoğan himself noted that, institutionally, the government could not make the change despite the fact that nearly 70 percent of the populace favored allowing female university students to wear the headscarf.²⁵⁶ Even before the 2004 elections (and showing supreme confidence in their platform), the AKP pushed to change the Turkish penal code in February 2004 to criminalize prohibitions against teaching, religious prayers, or religious ceremonies.²⁵⁷ These changes challenged the military by eliminating secular bulwarks as well as permitting more schools to the military tutelage of children institutionalized in public schools. Demonstrating how far the party had come since 2002, in June 2005, the AKP succeeded in passing the new criminal code in spite of a presidential veto by President

²⁵³ Kuru, *Secularism and State Policies*, 170.

²⁵⁴ Eligür, *Mobilization of Political Islam*, 250.

²⁵⁵ Filiz Başkan, “Accommodating Political Islam in Turkish Democracy,” in *Democratic Consolidation in Turkey: State, Political Parties, Civil Society, Civil-Military Relations, Socio-Economic Development, EU, Rise of Political Islam, and Separatist Kurdish Nationalism*, ed. Müge Aknur (Boca Raton, FL: Universal, 2012), 356.

²⁵⁶ Hale and Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism*, 72.

²⁵⁷ Eligür, *Mobilization of Political Islam*, 251.

Sezer.²⁵⁸ This new penal code reduced the sentence for opening illegal educational institutions (typically Islamic schools) from three years to one and completely abolished the provision that the institutions themselves are closed down upon discovery. The new law (previously tabled due to Presidential veto before the 2004 election) was a major victory over the secular establishment and a clear demonstration of the growing strength of the AKP.²⁵⁹

While the AKP attempted many policy changes directed at increasing the maneuvering room for political Islam and decreasing the position of the TSK on religion, a general view of the success of the party on religious policies from 2002 to 2006 argues for determined AKP avoidance of conflict with the military on key Islamic issues.²⁶⁰ Issues of governance and equality before the law took precedence over political Islam during this period.²⁶¹ This avoidance policy would change after a second national election, but during the first AKP government the politicians chose instead to counter opposition party charges of Islamism by working around potential conflict areas with the military specific to Islam.

4. Economic Programmatic and Particularistic Incentives: The IMF Reforms

Economic policy is an essential component of electoral competition, with both programmatic and particularistic incentives encouraging political parties to leverage state

²⁵⁸ While debating the new criminal code, a number of AKP leaders, including the Prime Minister, indicated their interest in introducing adultery laws, which were promoted as a means to gender equality (being based on the offended party), but immediately withdrew the policies, which were condemned as religious encroachment on the state. See Hale and Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism in Turkey: The Case of the AKP*, 70.

²⁵⁹ President Sezer was a holdover from the 1999 elections and a staunch secularist, and thus vetoed the change despite the strength of the AKP in parliament. The ability of the president to veto laws passed by parliament was a major reason for AKP efforts to nominate their own party member to the office in 2007. The nomination of a pious Muslim in 2007 directly challenged military demands and directly contributed to the “Constitutional Crisis” addressed at length in Chapter IV.

²⁶⁰ Sultan Tepe, “A Pro-Islamic Party? Promises and Limits of Turkey's Justice and Development Party,” in *The Emergence of a New Turkey: Democracy and the AK Parti*, ed. M. Hakan Yavuz (Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah Press, 2006), 123.

²⁶¹ Ersin Kalaycıoğlu, “Justice and Development Party at the Helm: Resurgence of Islam or Restitution of the Right-of-Center Predominant Party?,” in *Islamization of Turkey under the AKP Rule*, ed. Birol A. Yeşilada and Barry Rubin (New York: Routledge, 2011), 41.

resources to electoral support. In times of plenty, politicians can craft policies designed to provide additional goods and services to their political supporters, while in poor economic times, policies that decrease wasteful spending and increase growth will increase political support. In a period of economic crisis, a government that can respond successfully and improve economic conditions will also see political support increase, especially when the government is solving a crisis caused by other political parties. Eurobarometer surveys during the first AKP government show that Turks consistently rated unemployment and general economic conditions as the most important obstacles facing the country. The only security related issue was terrorism, which fell well behind these two factors to voters.²⁶²

This dynamic was at play in Turkey, where the AKP came to power following the massive financial crisis of 2000 and 2001. While the precise causes of the financial crisis are still debated, the results were devastating.²⁶³ At a February 2000 MGK meeting, President Sezer accused Prime Minister Ecevit of failing to investigate accusations of malpractice at the three state banks and allowing corrupt ministers to remain in their positions.²⁶⁴ The disagreement (coupled with a history of shaky Turkish government coalitions) fed a belief that the government and the IMF-backed financial program in place since 1999 were near collapse, and caused a run on the banks. Two public banks could not meet their obligations and the government responded by allowing the lira to float. The lira devalued by 50 percent in two months, triggering a massive recession.

The combination of poor financial oversight and a weak government devastated the economy. The three-year IMF program initiated in 1999 went from 3.6 billion in credit to 24.9 billion. The economy contracted by 9 percent in 2001—well above the IMF's prediction of a 3 percent contraction—and the national debt increased 500 percent

²⁶² European Commission, "Eurobarometer 62: Public Opinion in the European Union," 2.

²⁶³ Most economists agree that IMF reforms, in conjunction with a weak Central Bank and early exposure to foreign competition in an effort to liberalize, played a major role in the crisis. The government's inability to reliably perform exacerbated the underlying weaknesses in the Turkish economy. For more, see Zülküf Aydın, *The Political Economy of Turkey* (London: Pluto, 2005); Ilke Civelekoglu, "Enthusiastic Reformers of Pragmatic Rulers? The Central Bank Reform Agenda of the Turkish Political Elite and the EU Accession," *Turkish Studies* 13, no. 3 (2012).

²⁶⁴ Hale and Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism*, 101.

in two years. Economic improvement was an immediate requirement of the new government and a key campaign issue as voters abandoned those parties that had governed when the crisis hit.

The election of the AKP contributed to an immediate sense of national economic relief, with the hopes that a single-party government could avoid the political infighting of the coalition and deliver genuine economic leadership.²⁶⁵ In addition to committing to a review (though not a repudiation) of the IMF package, the AKP initiated structural plans to reform the economy, focusing on disciplined public spending, transparency, privatization, and tax reform.²⁶⁶ As will be discussed in the next section, a key component of IMF reform and economic recovery was establishing better oversight of military spending.

The decision to review but not revoke IMF aid sought to ease the concerns of the rural AKP voter while also signaling to business interests that the AKP was committed to the difficult measures that IMF reforms demand. Between 2002 and 2006, the Turkish 7 percent annual gross domestic product (GDP) growth and combined with millions of new jobs, despite labor force rate stalls in 2004, was exceeded only by countries such as India and China, and was proved a major economic success for the party and their commitment to IMF reform.²⁶⁷ İyâniş attributes this turnaround in part to a “single-minded commitment to fiscal discipline” by the AKP.²⁶⁸ Especially important for electoral politics, as local elections took place in March 2004, during the first quarter of 2004, real

²⁶⁵ “CSIS: AK Party Has to Deal with Economic Crisis that Propelled It to Power,” *Hurriyet Daily News*, November 12, 2002, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/csis-ak-party-has-to-deal-with-economic-crisis-that-propelled-it-to-power.aspx?pageID=438&n=csis-ak-party-has-to-deal-with-economic-crisis-that-propelled-it-to-power-2002-11-12>.

²⁶⁶ “AK Party to Launch New Economic Program,” *Hurriyet Daily News*, November 25, 2002, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/ak-party-to-launch-new-economic-program.aspx?pageID=438&n=ak-party-to-launch-new-economic-program-2002-11-25>.

²⁶⁷ Alan Richards and John Waterbury, *A Political Economy of the Middle East*, 3rd ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview, 2008), 238.

²⁶⁸ İyâniş, “The Political Economy of Turkey's Justice and Development Party,” in *The Emergence of a New Turkey: Democracy and the AK Parti*, edited by M. Hakan Yavuz (Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah Press, 2006), 216.

Turkish GNP increased at an incredibly high rate of 12 percent and confidence in the economy soared.²⁶⁹

The economic turnaround from 2002 through 2006, and commitment to IMF reforms, challenged the notion that the AKP would act in a partisan fashion on important national issues. This is perhaps best illustrated by the sources of criticism and sources of support for AKP IMF policies from the two main industrial associations in Turkey, the Türk Sanayicileri ve İşadamları Derneği (Turk Industry and Business Association or TÜSİAD) and the Müstakil İşadamları Derneği (Independent Industrialists and Businessmen's Association and henceforth MÜSİAD). Politically, TÜSİAD is Kemalist in orientation and viewed the 1961 constitution as too democratic while supporting the 1980 coup.²⁷⁰ MÜSİAD meanwhile follows a more Islamic business model; having been established in May 1990 by young Muslim businessmen who, in their own words, claimed to be "committed to social and economic development in the country by promoting production in industry, honesty and fairness in trade, and high ethical and moral politics."²⁷¹

The AKP's dedication to IMF reforms and principles had TÜSİAD supporting the AKP while being ideologically opposed to the party. Conversely, MÜSİAD was highly critical of the IMF reforms despite generally supporting the AKP, whose leadership ranks are filled with middle class Muslim businessmen.²⁷² That the typically Kemalist TÜSİAD would support economic policies pursued by the AKP while these same policies were opposed by AKP supporters in MÜSİAD demonstrates a greater theme of the AKP economic efforts during their first government, a willingness to eschew partisanship in favor of results. By standing by existing international agreements and economic reforms against their constituency's demand for greater latitude in social welfare programs than

²⁶⁹ Ibid., 215.

²⁷⁰ E. Fuat Keyman and Berrin Koyuncu, "Globalization, Alternative Modernities and the Political Economy of Turkey," *Review of International Political Economy* 12, no. 1 (2005), 113.

²⁷¹ Independent Industrialists and Businessmen's Association.
<http://www.musiad.org.tr/en/default.aspx>.

²⁷² Engin Yıldırım, "Labor Pains or Achilles' Heel: The Justice and Development Party and Labor in Turkey," in *The Emergence of a New Turkey: Democracy and the AK Parti*, edited by M. Hakan Yavuz (Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah Press), 239.

IMF reforms allow, the AKP established themselves as a party that would seek performance over politics, precisely what voters were looking for. The party demonstrated a willingness use policy to improve the lives of all Turks, not just those that had elected the party.²⁷³

5. Particularistic Incentives: The TSK Budget and Its Sources

Following the 2001 economic crisis, attention shifted to how state institutions were being financed. In particular, oversight of the TSK budget became increasingly important to voters.²⁷⁴ The relative priority that politicians assign to military spending is an important indicator and can be evidenced by budget shares.²⁷⁵ That is, the absolute value of the slice of pie that is a military budget is less important than how the military slice compares to the rest of the pie. Importantly, even politicians who prefer and support a robust defense apparatus will be induced to minimize defense spending in order to maximize resource distribution amongst voters absent a threat to national security.²⁷⁶

Understanding of how civilians provide oversight of the Turkish military budget (and expenditures) requires an equal measure of understanding of the multiple ways that the Turkish Armed Forces receives funding. Because military autonomy is higher where defense industries are in the hands of the military, asserting oversight of the military budget was a critical component of increasing civilian control.²⁷⁷ Constitutionally the Turkish Armed Forces are funded through parliamentary budgeting. In practice, however, various funds and foundations established after military interventions have created funding streams for the armed forces that are extremely difficult to monitor.

²⁷³ Soner Çağaptay, "The November 2002 Elections and Turkey's New Political Era," *Middle East Review of International Affairs (MERIA) Journal* 6, no. 4 (December 2002), 7, <http://www.gloria-center.org/2002/12/cagaptay-2002-12-04/>.

²⁷⁴ Lale Sariibrahimoğlu, "Turkish Armed Forces," in *Democratic Oversight and Reform of the Security Sector in Turkey*, ed. Ümit Cizre (Zurich, Switzerland: Geneva Center for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2008), 70.

²⁷⁵ Hunter, *Eroding Military Influence*, 96.

²⁷⁶ Ibid.

²⁷⁷ Ümit Cizre Sakallioğlu, "The Anatomy of the Turkish Military's Political Autonomy," *Comparative Politics* 29, no. 2 (1997), 160.

Writing for the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Nurhan Yentürk breaks down Turkish defense spending into three categories: transparent, limited information available, and virtually no information available.²⁷⁸ Transparent institutions include Ministry of National Defense and Undersecretariat for Defense Industries spending.²⁷⁹ Limited information about spending category spending consists of organizations such as the Defence Industry Support Fund (Savunma Sanayi Destekleme Fonu or SSDF), the Secret Fund, military research and development, and financial transfers to Northern Cyprus.²⁸⁰ Lastly, those institutions about which information is nearly impossible to obtain include the Turkish Armed Forces Foundation (Türk Silahlı Kuvvetlerini Güçlendirme Vakfı or TSKGV) that contributes funding for the TSK, which is not subject to civilian audit.²⁸¹ Founded to prevent dependence on foreign military technology transfers, the value of the TSKGV contribution to the TSK is unpublished and cannot be precisely determined, but the purchasing power of the institution is significant.²⁸² The TSKGV has shares in 18 companies, and has so much purchasing power that, in 2005, the holding company was able to maneuver to take over Turkish Aerospace Industries and establish a holding company, 80 percent of which was owned by the military.²⁸³

The additional purchasing power of DISF, which lies under the supervision of the Directorate of Defense Industry, stems from a 1985 law (No. 3238 of the DISF founding law) permits extra-budgetary purchases of arms and equipment through the DISF. Extra-budgetary sources of income that escape oversight include, for example, national gaming revenue, racetrack betting profits, the national lottery, and shares of taxes on

²⁷⁸Nurhan Yentürk, "Measuring Turkish Military Expenditure," *SIPRI Insights on Peace and Security* no. 2014/1 (2014), 2.

²⁷⁹ Ibid., 3.

²⁸⁰ Ibid.

²⁸¹ Nil S. Şatana, "Parliamentary Oversight of Defence-Related Expenditures: The Turkish Case," in *Promoting Good Governance in the Security Sector: Principles and Challenges*, ed. Mert Kayhan and Merijn Hartog (Groningen, Netherlands: Centre for European Security Studies, 2013), 46.

²⁸² Yentürk, "Measuring Turkish Military Expenditure," 10.

²⁸³ "Turkish Military Takes over TAI," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, March 11, 2005, <https://janes.ihs.com.libproxy.nps.edu/CustomPages/Janes/DisplayPage.aspx?DocType=News&ItemId=++1172997&Pubabbrev=JDW>

corporations. Each of these institutions was established to prevent dependence on foreign arms sales for equipping the military.

While not explicitly created to provide independent revenue streams for the armed forces, these institutions have since metastasized to do just that. Apart from these institutions, the Turkish military also receives unmonitored funding through a relationship with the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (Türkiye Bilimsel ve Teknolojik Araştırma Kurumu, or TÜBİTAK), which supports research and development.²⁸⁴ Individually these various organizations were created to provide a specific service for the armed forces: domestic military infrastructure. Collectively, they weave a nearly untraceable web of purchasing power apart from the national budget voted on by elected members of parliament.

The final institution that lies outside parliamentary oversight is the Armed Forces Trust and Pension Fund (OYAK). Created by Law No. 205 in January 1961 by the National Unity Committee following the 1960 coup, ostensibly to provide middle class lifestyles to military officers, OYAK enjoys a legal status that enables privileges of both private and public law.²⁸⁵ Since 1961, OYAK has grown into a colossal economic power in Turkey, comprising 60 companies (29 of which are entirely owned by the fund), and is one of the five largest holding funds in Turkey.²⁸⁶

OYAK's maintains a unique legal status that not only gives the holding economic advantages, but it also tax benefits that come at the expense of the state. Exempt from income, corporate, inheritance, and other taxes, the holding enjoys mandatory deductions from member's salaries without mandatory disbursements. As OYAK falls under the military administrative courts rather than civilian, it also enjoys de facto immunity from its own members. Finally, OYAK holdings are defined as state property, and are

²⁸⁴ Şatana, "Parliamentary Oversight of Defence-Related," 50.

²⁸⁵ İsmet Akça, *Military-Economic Structure in Turkey: Present Situation, Problems, and Solutions*, ed. TESEV, trans. Ebru İlhan and Elif Kalaycıoğlu (Istanbul, Turkey: Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation [TESEV], 2010), 8.

²⁸⁶ Aknur, "Impact of Civil-Military Relations," 221.

therefore both protected from confiscation²⁸⁷ and also become the problem of the taxpayers, who are the recipients of any companies that go bankrupt.

Due to lack of transparency in expenditures, the military budget approved by parliament itself also represents a significant impediment to eventual to democratic civilian control. In many Turkish budgets, the single item “Defense Services,” which can contain up to 99 percent of all military official spending, is the only detail on which civilians have to vote.²⁸⁸ Typical parliamentary votes for budget approval are unanimous, and lack virtually any oversight of defense spending. Comparison of the budgets proposals released by the Ministry of Finance for the TSK, the National Police, and the ministries of Finance, Health, and Interior demonstrate the oversight disparity. While the police and ministries deliver to parliament budget proposals of 28, 41, 24, and 13 pages, respectively, the budget delivered by the TSK (whose budget far outstrips all of the other institutions), runs roughly 2.5 pages and is devoid of any detail on how the budget will be allocated.²⁸⁹

Complete oversight of defense spending in Turkey by civilian governments is a nigh impossibility, though the AKP did make significant efforts to establish better civilian control from 2002 to 2006. For example, in 2004 Parliament amended article 160 of the 1982 constitution to increase transparency over auditing the military, and in 2010 also mandated greater transparency for the Court of Auditors to support the 2004 reform. Importantly for oversight purposes, as part of AKP efforts to increase government transparency in 2003 the party also passed law no. 5018 on public financial management and control. This law forced the Ministry of Finance to publish information on military spending (as well as the spending of other government institutions) and greatly increased civilian awareness of military spending.²⁹⁰ In addition to these efforts at expanding

²⁸⁷ Lale Kemal, “Military Will Never Give Up,” *Zaman*, December 7, 2011, <http://www.todayszaman.com/columnists/lale-kemal-265120-military-will-never-give-up.html>

²⁸⁸ Akça, *Military-Economic Structure in Turkey*, 87.

²⁸⁹ Yentürk, “Measuring Turkish Military Expenditure,” 16.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 2.

political oversight of military resources, the AKP also made early and large cuts in the military budget allocated by Turkish parliament from 2002–2006.

After a 32 percent increase in 2002 by the outgoing coalition government, annual TSK budgets dropped significantly from 2002 to 2006 under the AKP.²⁹¹ The 2003 budget was the first wherein the Ministry of Finance worked with the TSK to develop a budget. At 9 percent of the total Turkish budget, the military still received larger slices than any other ministry.²⁹² Importantly however, the AKP reduced the percentage of GDP allocated to the military from a 3.9 percent in 2002 to 2.5 percent by 2006. The reduction of nearly four billion dollars in four years cut the parliamentary budget of the TSK by roughly 20 percent during the first AKP government. When we recall that the Turkish economy also experienced economic turnaround and increase in GDP during these same years, military cuts in real terms and GDP become even more dramatic.

These reductions moved the TSK budget as a percentage of GDP from alongside Russia to a spending level closer to NATO allies Greece, France, and the UK.²⁹³ By reducing the military budget both in real terms and relative to total GDP, the politicians freed up billions of dollars for spending patronage networks and the incentives discussed previously such as economic reform, hiring prayer leaders, and infrastructure.

Not content with merely reducing the budget, AKP parliament cancelled major weapons purchases such as Cobra attack helicopters and Boeing airborne warning and control aircraft.²⁹⁴ Importantly, while the AKP reduced the military budget each year from 2002 to 2006, and began to challenge specific procurements during that same time period, the party continued to refocus the defense industrial sector capacity towards

²⁹¹ “Turkish Defence Budget Raised by a Third,” *Jane’s Defence Weekly*, October 25, 2002, <https://janes.ihs.com.libproxy.nps.edu/CustomPages/Janes/DisplayPage.aspx?DocType=News&ItemId=++1165553&Pubabbrev=JDW>.

²⁹² “Military Still Takes Lion’s Share of Ankara’s Budget,” *Jane’s Defence Weekly*, December 31, 2003, <https://janes.ihs.com.libproxy.nps.edu/CustomPages/Janes/DisplayPage.aspx?DocType=News&ItemId=++1169416&Pubabbrev=JDW>.

²⁹³ Yentürk, “Measuring Turkish Military Expenditure,” 13.

²⁹⁴ “Controversy Grows over Turkish Procurement,” *Jane’s Defence Weekly*, May 15, 2003, <https://janes.ihs.com.libproxy.nps.edu/CustomPages/Janes/DisplayPage.aspx?DocType=News&ItemId=++1167507&Pubabbrev=JDW>.

confronting regional conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan and internal counterinsurgency against the PKK. Though the AKP sought control over the military and expenditures, the party also recognized and valued the importance of a strong military in safeguarding the country against the growing violence stemming from the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003, which all senior Turkish leaders feared.²⁹⁵

In other ways, too, AKP security policy was structured to avoid civil-military conflict prematurely. Even while cutting the military budget both as a percentage of GDP and in real dollars, Prime Minister Erdoğan allowed significant leeway to the military to pursue policy objectives important to the generals. Due to lingering effects of the 2001 crisis, from 2003 to 2004, the Turkish defense industry was in danger of collapse, which could make the country completely dependent on foreign arms sales to equip and maintain the military.²⁹⁶ To avoid this scenario, parliament passed a resolution that transferred the civilian-controlled Turkish Defense Industries to the Turkish Ministry of National Defense, under a three-star general, and increased military autonomy over the domestic defense industry.²⁹⁷ Similarly, in 2006, Prime Minister Erdoğan approved the creation of a defense industry holding company with 90 percent of the shares being held by the TSKGV, despite opposition from local industrialists.²⁹⁸ Thus, while reducing military spending significantly, the AKP also insured that the military remained properly equipped to conduct the roles necessary for state security that were being increasingly identified by the civilian government, while also providing for domestic defense industrial capability.

²⁹⁵ William Hale, *Turkey, the US, and Iraq*, ed. School of Oriental and African Studies (London: Middle East Institute, 2007), 159.

²⁹⁶ “Turkish Industry: Staying Afloat,” *Jane’s Defence Weekly*, September 17, 2003, <https://janes.ihs.com.libproxy.nps.edu/CustomPages/Janes/DisplayPage.aspx?DocType=News&ItemId=+++1168569&Pubabbrev=JDW>

²⁹⁷ “Danger Lurks for Turkish Defence Industry,” *Jane’s Defence Weekly*, March 18, 2004, <https://janes.ihs.com.libproxy.nps.edu/CustomPages/Janes/DisplayPage.aspx?DocType=News&ItemId=+++1170016&Pubabbrev=JDW>

²⁹⁸ “Turkey to Set Up Military-Owned Holding Company,” *Jane’s Defence Weekly*, April 5, 2006, <https://janes.ihs.com.libproxy.nps.edu/CustomPages/Janes/DisplayPage.aspx?DocType=News&ItemId=+++1153244&Pubabbrev=JDW>.

C. CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS, EU HARMONIZATION, AND MGK REFORMS

Effective leveraging of the programmatic and particularistic incentives enabled the AKP to pursue reforms designed to limit the role of the TSK in domestic politics. Changes to the constitution provided the legal basis to reduce the military influence in several areas, most significantly the role of the National Security Council. In addition to a reduced role on the MGK, the TSK saw a reduction or elimination of their influence over security courts, radio, the educational system, and other areas of government.

In many cases, reforms were aimed at compliance with European Union *acquis* and implemented in conjunction with EU harmonization packages. Military reforms served the dual purposes of increasing civilian control and making Turkey more marketable to those EU member states that might eventually allow Turkish accession. Between 2002 and 2006, significant military reforms were legislated by parliament in conjunction with four sets of harmonization packages, the 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th. While these harmonization packages included legal reforms to a variety of government functions, only those reforms that changed the relative power between the civilian government and the TSK are discussed in here. Though tempting to consider EU accession as a potential issue of concordance between the military and civilian politicians, it is important to recall that concordance sought to explain a lack of coups rather than increasing civilian control. Thus, while EU accession might have prevented the military from ousting a political party, this is not the same as accepting the severe reforms and limitations placed on military autonomy by the AKP. In Turkey we should consider EU accession instead as a catalyst accelerating the natural tendencies of electoral competition.

Creating, repealing, or amending laws are the responsibility of the Turkish parliament, which consists of 16 standing committees that generally conform to individual ministries.²⁹⁹ Sessions cannot be opened without one-third of all deputies present, and decisional quorums require an absolute majority of votes cast.³⁰⁰ Laws take effect 15 days after passage and are enforced by the president unless the president returns

²⁹⁹ Özbudun, *Constitutional System of Turkey*, 66.

³⁰⁰ GNAT, *Constitution of the Republic of Turkey*, Article 96.

the laws to parliament for changes within that same window. A law passed a second time without written changes overrides the presidential veto and becomes binding unless challenged by the president before the Constitutional Court.³⁰¹ Thus, while a political party that maintains an absolute majority can pass laws without regard to presidential veto power, and a government cannot be recalled unless by majority of members of parliament, parties which challenge the president can risk challenge at the Constitutional Court level.

1. 2001 and 2004 Constitutional Reforms

The 2001 constitutional reforms included amendments to Article 118 of the constitution, which governs the relationship of the MGK to the government. While AKP leadership did not oversee the passage of the reforms, the AKP was responsible for implementing and enforcing of the amendments set to take effect in 2003. Together, the 2001 and 2004 amendments resulted in the amending of a full one-third of the 1980 constitution, representing major changes by civilians of a document crafted under the direct supervision of the military.³⁰² The changes to the MGK were part of four targeted areas of military reform pursued by the AKP between 2002 and 2006. While changing the nature and composition of the MGK, the AKP also acted to remove MGK—selected representatives from civilian boards, subject the military budget process to full parliamentary oversight, and reduce the scope of jurisdiction possessed by military courts.³⁰³

In addition to amending Article 118 pertaining to the National Security Council (discussed in greater detail below), constitutional reforms in 2004 amended Article 131 regarding the Higher Education Council, Article 160 of the audit courts, and Article 143 on state security courts. The amendments to articles 131 and 160 were necessary to allow future regulatory changes to the Higher Education Council and audit court system.

³⁰¹ Özbudun, *Constitutional System of Turkey*, 66.

³⁰² Republic of Turkey, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Political Reforms in Turkey* (Ankara, Turkey: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2007), 5.

³⁰³ Ayse Nilufer Narli, *Aligning Civil-Military Relations in Turkey: Transparency Building in Defense Sector and the EU Reforms* (N.p.: OEBH, 2003), 164.

Removing military oversight of the education system meant reduced indoctrination of military values in grade schools and also increased the opportunity for students graduating from Imam-Hatip schools to gain admission to university. Article 143 removed a significant source of military interference by completely abolishing state security courts, the hearings of which were closed and thus produced decisions virtually impossible to appeal, processes incompatible with EU democratic norms.³⁰⁴ The state security courts were implemented by the TSK following the 1980 coup and were a significant source of military authority. As the courts had the power to identify and prosecute alleged threats to the Republic apart from civilian oversight or control, their elimination was a significant blow to military independence while also guaranteeing that civilians would be tried in civilian rather than military court.³⁰⁵

In 2004, the Law on the Establishment and Trial Procedures of Military Courts was also amended to remove the ability of the military courts to hold suspects beyond four days and required immediate notification to next of kin when a suspect was detained. Additional added civil protections included provisions against using findings obtained illegally as evidence.³⁰⁶ By changing the language of the constitution written after the 1980 coup, parliament was able to pave the way for the numerous future reforms that would be passed through parliament and then branded as EU harmonization packages.

2. EU Harmonization Packages 2002–2006 and Additional MGK Reforms

The 6th EU harmonization package was the first that entered force under the AKP government and was legislated in part by the AKP, taking effect in July 2003. This package removed military prerogatives by altering much of the legal infrastructure that enabled military autonomy on security issues, such as the ability of the state security

³⁰⁴ Thomas W. Smith, “Leveraging Norms: The Echr and Turkey's Human Rights Reforms,” in *Human Rights in Turkey*, ed. Zehra F. Kabasakal Arat (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), 270.

³⁰⁵ Şule Toktaş and Ümit Kurt, “The Turkish Military's Autonomy, JDP Rule and the EU Reform Process in the 2000s: An Assessment of the Turkish Version of Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DECAF),” *Turkish Studies* 11, no. 3 (2010), 391.

³⁰⁶ Republic of Turkey, Ministry of Affairs, *Political Reforms in Turkey*, 20.

courts to try suspects without legal counsel. Similarly, the definition of terrorism was changed to require force or violence in order to define an act as “terrorist,” a change targeting the propensity of the Turkish military to accuse political dissidents of terrorism. These changes demonstrated the intention of civilians in government to take control over the state security discourse that had been dominated by the military for decades and, when combined with the aforementioned reforms to military courts, benefit the voter by removing the ability of the military to try civilians as terrorists for such infractions as criticism of the military or advocating Kurdish rights.

Constitutional definitions of Turkey as a unitary state, the people of which are Turks, had been used to justify provisions against radio or television broadcasts and education in languages other than Turkish (most frequently Kurdish), while accusing those who sought to use other languages of dissent against the Republic for employing foreign languages not recognized in the constitution.³⁰⁷ The 6th harmonization package also permitted both public and private organizations to use languages other than Turkish, and protected this reform by amending Article 6 to remove the MGK representative from the Board of Supervision. This was the first of many government boards that would no longer require a member of the military serving on the board as a condition of the right of the institution to operate.³⁰⁸

Just one month later, in August 2003, the first major reform package introduced by the AKP took force. With the 7th harmonization package, the civilian government began to exert significant formal authority over the TSK.³⁰⁹ In addition to the reforms themselves, the manner in which the civilians legislated these changes was also telling. Military reforms passed and packaged as the 7th harmonization package bypassed the traditional step of submitting draft laws to the MGK for feedback. Instead, the AKP took

³⁰⁷ GNAT, *Constitution of the Republic of Turkey*, Article 3.

³⁰⁸ Republic of Turkey, Ministry of Affairs, *Political Reforms in Turkey*, 13.

³⁰⁹ Daněk, *Changes in Civil-Military Relations*, 32.

all draft laws directly to parliament to reduce military influence over the laws that targeted the armed forces.³¹⁰

Included in the 7th harmonization package was an amendment to Article 159 of the Penal Code reducing the mandatory sentence for “insulting” or “deriding” state institutions (specifically the military) and eliminating any penalty for publicly criticizing them.³¹¹ An amendment to the Law on Foreign Language Education and the Learning of Different Languages and Dialects by Turkish Citizens removed the provision of consulting with the MGK before beginning language instruction, returning this authority to the civilian Council of Ministers.³¹² In addition to changes to the form of military authority, serious changes to the functions of TSK autonomy were included in the 7th harmonization package, specifically reforms to the relationship of the judiciary to the military and the MGK to the government.³¹³

Article 11 of the Law on the Establishment and Trial Procedures of Military Courts removed the authority of the military to try civilians for criminal offenses such as discouraging the public from military duty.³¹⁴ In a major change to budgetary autonomy, the Law on the Court of Audits was amended to allow the court to (at the request of parliament) audit all accounts and transactions where public funds were used.³¹⁵ In amending the Law on the Court of Accounts, parliament essentially legislated itself the right to audit any military spending at any time when tax dollars were involved in the transaction.

Perhaps most importantly, the 7th harmonization package took direct action against the significant military authority contained within the body of the National

³¹⁰ Müge Aknur, “Civil-Military Relations During the AK Party Era: Major Developments and Challenges,” *Insight Turkey* 15, no. 4 (2013), 137.

³¹¹ Commission of the European Communities, *2004 Regular Report on Turkey's Progress Towards Accession* (Brussels: Author, 2004), 37.

³¹² Republic of Turkey, Ministry of Affairs, *Political Reforms in Turkey*, 17.

³¹³ Yaprak Gürsoy, “The Impact of EU-Driven Reforms on the Political Autonomy of the Turkish Military,” in *Turkey and the EU: Accession and Reform*, ed. Gamze Avcı and Ali Çarkoğlu (New York: Routledge, 2013), 87.

³¹⁴ Commission of the European Communities, *2004 Regular Report*, 34.

³¹⁵ Gürsoy, “The Impact of EU-Driven Reforms,” 88.

Security Council. While discussed in detail below, it is worth noting the multiple changes to the MGK that reduced the power of the institution from an organ of state security policy crafting and implementation to a mere advisory council.³¹⁶

- All Secretary General executive powers were eliminated.
- Military Access to civilian agencies was eliminated.
- Secretary General staff confidentiality was eliminated (now being subject to parliamentary inquiry).
- Regular MGK meetings became less frequent.
- Requirement for Secretary General to be a military officer was eliminated.³¹⁷

In 2003, the AKP civilians in both the prime minister's office and parliament succeeded in legislating reforms of the military, targeting the military budget, leadership structure, and tertiary roles in a variety of other government institutions. The 2003 Regular Report published by the European Union concluded that the significant changes to the MGK, Court of Audits, and the reduced role of the TSK in the judicial process provided much improved formal control over the armed forces.³¹⁸ Negative critiques in this report were limited to the informal mechanisms the military still enjoyed, such as public speeches on current events or policies of the government.³¹⁹

Parliament passed the 8th harmonization package in 2004, which again curtailed the role of the TSK and MGK in advisory roles outside national defense. The Law on Higher Education was amended to prevent a General Staff member from serving on the council, while the Law on the Establishment of and Broadcasting by Radio and Television Corporations repealed the MGK member position on the Supreme Board for

³¹⁶ Narli, *Aligning Civil-Military Relations*, 166.

³¹⁷ Commission of the European Communities, *2003 Regular Report on Turkey's Progress Towards Accession* (Brussels: Author, 2003), 13.

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 19.

³¹⁹ Specifically, the 2003 Regular Report (and others that would follow) criticized the TSK criticisms of previous Regular Reports. Each year the reports criticized the Turkish military; the reports would shortly thereafter be condemned by the TSK, thus perpetuating the cycle.

Radio and Television.³²⁰ MGK positions were also eliminated from the High Communication Council and from the board representing the Law on the Protection of Minors from Harmful Publications. These efforts represented breakthrough steps towards eliminating the “semi-authoritarian” infrastructure established by the military in the preceding decades.³²¹

The 2004 Regular Report observed that the reforms passed with the 7th and 8th harmonization packages had shifted the balance further towards the civilians but, like earlier reports, noted that the formal reforms still had to be implemented and maintained, while attempting to diminish informal military mechanisms in the future.³²² The 2005 report specifically commented on the propensity of the military to use informal outlets to influence political outcomes, citing generals commenting on the EU process, critiquing previous Regular Reports, and regularly exceeding the confines of national defense-related issues.³²³

The final harmonization package passed between 2002 and 2006 was the 9th, in 2006. This package again amended the Law on the Establishment and Legal Procedures of Military Courts, this time by abolishing the courts’ authority to try civilians during peace unless specifically authorized by parliament. Parliament also altered the provisions of the law to allow for retrials based on the European Court of Human Rights for those civilians previously convicted by the military courts.

Collectively, the reforms legislated by parliament between 2002 and 2006 vastly expanded the formal control over virtually every aspect of military involvement in politics. The AKP parliament dramatically curtailed military prerogatives in budgeting, judicial proceedings, influence on civilian boards, in civil society, and the National Security Council itself.³²⁴ The multiple constitutional amendments and reform packages

³²⁰ Republic of Turkey, Ministry of Affairs, *Political Reforms in Turkey*, 18.

³²¹ Karbekir Akkoyunlu, *Military Reform and Democratisation: Turkish and Indonesian Experience at the Turn of the Millennium*, vol. 392 of the Adelphi Papers (London: Routledge, 2007), 40.

³²² Commission of the European Communities, *2004 Regular Report*, 23.

³²³ Commission of the European Communities, *2005 Regular Report on Turkey's Progress Towards Accession* (Brussels: Author, 2005), 14.

³²⁴ Narli, *Aligning Civil-Military Relations*, 25.

helped convince contemporary Turkish scholars that, during the formal control window, Turkey had made significant progress in undoing the “semi-authoritarian legacy of the MGK regime.”³²⁵

3. Implementation of National Security Council Reforms

The AKP implemented reforms of the MGK by amending through parliament the laws governing MGK roles and responsibilities derived from Article 118 of the constitution. The strongest MGK reforms occurred in 2004 and were part of the reforms that would comprise the 7th harmonization package and came on the heels of the overwhelming Turkish electoral success in March 2004. The first of these was an amendment to Article 4 of the Law on National Security Council and the Secretariat General of the National Security Council, which was rewritten to reduce the advisory power of the Council. Prior to this change, MGK recommendations were to be given priority consideration, which by default meant giving the military generals priority consideration.³²⁶ Having reduced the importance of MGK counsel, Article 5 was amended to decrease the frequency of council meetings from monthly to bi-monthly and also repealed the authority of the Secretary General to convene meetings of the council, reducing the opportunities for the generals to use the MGK as a means to pressure the civilian government.³²⁷

Also in 2004, Articles 9 and 14 of the Law on the National Security Council and the Secretariat General of the National Security Council were repealed, thereby eliminating the executive powers of the secretary general. Article 13 was similarly amended to make the role of the secretary general match that of the council. These three amendments first made the council administrative in nature rather than executive, and then limited the role of the secretary general administratively running the council, in turn making it even less likely that future reforms could be contested by the military.³²⁸

³²⁵ Ergun Özbudun, "Democratization Reforms in Turkey, 1993-2004," *Insight Turkey* 8, no. 2 (June 2007), 195.

³²⁶ Jenkins, *Context and Circumstance*, 337–352.

³²⁷ Aknur, "Impact of Civil-Military Relations," 228.

³²⁸ Cook, *Ruling but Not Governing*, 132.

Amending Article 15 was perhaps the most important reform, changing the appointment process for the secretary general to allow for civilians to serve in the role previously reserved for military officers. Under the new process the prime minister nominates and the president approves the position, without military input, whereas before the military would select from amongst their own ranks one to serve on as head of the (then largely executive) MGK. As the Turkish MGK has been a highly effective institution for implementing security policy, establishing civilian control over the institution was of critical importance.³²⁹

Finally, Article 19 was also repealed, eliminating the ability of the MGK to demand classified or non-classified documents from various organs, including ministries, public and private institutions, and nongovernmental organizations.³³⁰ Previously the supervisory role of the MGK over much of society enabled the military to demand documents from any public or private organization without cause and allowed the MGK to monitor suspected dissidents and (when combined with previous judicial prerogatives) potentially use these documents in criminal proceedings against those same individuals or organizations.³³¹ For decades, the MGK had acted as the focal point for military interventions in politics, deciding who or what represented threats to state security, directing civilian politicians how to deal with these threats, and on occasion labeling those same politicians as the threat itself.³³²

Even more than reducing the military budget or implementing audit controls over military expenditures, the reforms to the MGK eliminated the formal capacity of the military to intervene in domestic politics. As we will see in Chapter IV, by the time the TSK next decided to challenge the authority of the civilian politicians, the military had no leverage other than the threat of armed intervention, like in 1960 or 1980. The AKP had

³²⁹ Thomas C. Bruneau, Florina Cristiana Matei, and Sak Sakoda, "National Security Councils: Their Potential Functions in Democratic Civil-Military Relations," *Defense & Security Analysis* 25, no. 3 (2009), 258.

³³⁰ Republic of Turkey, Ministry of Affairs, *Political Reforms in Turkey*, 17.

³³¹ Erdoğan-Tosun, "Civil Society and Democratic," 199.

³³² Jenkins, *Context and Circumstance*, 337–349.

effectively wielded the “virtues and legitimizing power of democracy” to render military interference as illegitimate.³³³

D. CONCLUSION

Recalling that Hunter’s central thesis is that “electoral competition creates incentives for politicians to reduce the interference of a politically powerful and active military, and that broad popular support enhances their support to do so,”³³⁴ these policies and reforms enacted by the AKP during the initial control phase provide substantial evidence that Hypothesis #1 explains the change in control.

Hypotheses #1 (Electoral Competition): The AKP was able to exert control over the TSK from 2002 to 2011 through repeated electoral and policy successes, which enabled emboldened challenges by the AKP of TSK prerogatives.

Between 2002 and 2006, the AKP won national elections and local elections in a strong enough fashion to organize and implement single-party government with nearly two-thirds of all available seats in parliament. Because nearly 45 percent of votes for parliament cast in the 2002 election went unrepresented, as the votes were cast for a party that did not cross the minimum threshold, there was no possibility for minority parties to form coalitions against AKP policies and agendas in the parliament. With the ability to pass legislation and override a presidential veto, the AKP was able to pursue programmatic and particularistic incentives that would increase political support for the party and therefore lead to additional success in future elections. While successful policies between 2002 and 2006 did increase the share of the votes that would go to the AKP (as evidenced by the increase in vote share in the 2004 local election and as the 2007 elections will show in Chapter IV), they also engendered significant resentment towards the AKP from the minority party in parliament, the CHP.³³⁵

³³³ Ihsan D. Dağ, *Turkey: Between Democracy and Militarism: Post Kemalist Perspectives*, vol. 48 of Orion Publications (Ankara, Turkey: Orion Kitabevi, 2008), 114.

³³⁴ Hunter, *Eroding Military Influence*, 2.

³³⁵ This combination of a party strong enough to form a unified government without minority parties, yet representing only slightly over a third of the voters would bring AKP–CHP–TSK relations to the breaking point in 2007.

The AKP was able to leverage the power of their election wins towards greater political support by (1) taking actions aiming to shore up their political base, including hiring Imams and reducing restrictions on Islamic education; while also (2) pursuing pragmatic policies that held broad appeal without the risk of alienating a constituency and/or that demonstrated legitimacy, such as IMF reforms, anti-corruption programs, and increases in civil society organizations' rights to organize. Broad political support combined with a deep base of party loyalists allowed the AKP to pursue greater civilian oversight of the military budget and the role of the TSK in society. These programmatic and particularistic incentives demanded (and enabled) by domestic pressure worked in conjunction with a period of warm EU relations to create the opportunity structure for a variety of formal reforms to the role of military in Turkish politics.

Challenges to the military included eliminating TSK control of the National Security Council, the chain of command, the jurisdiction of the courts, the role of the military in civil society, the economic structure of the military, and the national education system. In almost every area where the military was politically involved, the AKP was able to increase civilian authority. The civilian politicians did not just challenge the military from the office of prime minister. Parliament also proved adept at leveraging political support and the opportunity provided by EU accession negotiations to work around the military and increase parliamentary power over the military.³³⁶

Consideration of the policies and reforms that led to the closure of the gap between the civilians and the military in relative political power provide strong support for Hypothesis #1. Beginning with the unprecedented success of the 2002 national elections and continuing with the success of the 2004 local elections, voters overwhelmingly demonstrated a desire for AKP leadership. That Chief of General Staff Hilmi Özkök and the TGS recognized this fact made it that much easier for the AKP to depart from the path-dependent process that historical institutionalists would have predicted based off the 1997 intervention, February 28 Process, and the Constitutional

³³⁶ Dağ, *Turkey: Between Democracy*, 107.

Courts banning of the Welfare Party.³³⁷ Furthermore, that the most significant reforms of the period took place in the summer of 2004 following the local elections adds strong evidence that the increase in voter support for the already overwhelmingly popular AKP made challenging the civilians all the more difficult for the military, who ended up yielding their formal position in government rather quietly.

³³⁷ F. Michael Wuthrich, "Factors Influencing the Military-Media Relations in Turkey," *Middle East Journal* 66, no. 2 (2012), 271.

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IV. CONTESTATION AND CONTROL, 2007–2011

A. INTRODUCTION

By leveraging electoral victories into programmatic and particularistic incentives, the AKP succeeded in exerting formal control over many aspects of military prerogatives from 2002 to 2006. The multitude of constitutional reforms and changes to those laws and institutions, which the military implemented following the 1980 coup, also made possible the “parallel military reforms” to the SC, the military budgeting process, and military involvement in the judiciary.³³⁸ In 2002, the electorate coalesced largely around two distinct political parties (with the AKP receiving a pure majority of seats in parliament). This demonstrated to both the military and the politicians that society was, at least temporarily, more interested in pursuing issues such as economic prosperity, political freedoms, and fighting corruption, rather than the largely ideological issues that kept society divided during most governments. This social cohesion had the added benefit of discouraging military intervention long enough for the TSK to enact substantive legal reforms.³³⁹ For Chapter IV and the period of contestation and control from 2007 to 2011, the focus moves from policies seeking to improve political lifespan to open contestation between the military, the secular establishment, and the AKP, for ultimate control of the government.

Could the formal controls that were enacted between 2002 and 2006 actually withstand a concerted effort by the military to maintain political privileges and the ability to intervene in politics? It is one thing to legislate a reduction in military autonomy, it is another thing to see those reforms accepted by the military and become permanent fixtures of the institution. Recalling the research question: “How did the civilian AK Parti gain and maintain control over the armed forces from 2002 to 2011?” could the civilians maintain control over the armed forces in the face of a direct military challenge to

³³⁸ Serra, *Military Transition*, 66.

³³⁹ *Ibid.*, 67.

civilian authority prompted by infringements on a military's professional interests by the politicians?

Hypotheses #1 (Electoral Competition): The AKP was able to exert control over the TSK from 2002 to 2011 through repeated electoral and policy successes that enabled the AKP to challenge TSK prerogatives.

Contained within Hypothesis 1 is an attempt to answer the civilian control contradiction: how to strongly promote civilian control without encouraging military interventions, with a focus on continuous repetition of electoral and policy success. The success of the AKP in election after election affirmed to all actors that, when allowed to choose between the AKP and other political parties, voters continued to select the AKP and the policies the party enacted, including military reforms. Furthermore, when polled voters consistently support nearly all aspects of the AKP platform, from constitutional reform to Ergenekon investigations, and democratization efforts.³⁴⁰

As the title implies, the purpose of Chapter IV is to link the formal controls discussed in Chapter III to the period from 2007 forward, which is marked by open confrontation between the AKP on the one hand, and the military and their secularist allies, on the other. As this chapter will show, during this later period, confrontation over the office of president led to a constitutional crisis, special elections in 2007, and a constitutional court case that narrowly failed to ban the AKP and its members from politics. In the aftermath of these challenges, an emboldened AKP emerged, one that controls all significant levers of power in Turkish government, has just won a special election necessary to break a deadlock over the office of president, and survived an existential threat from what remained of the security establishment in government. Led by Prime Minister Erdogan, this bolstered AKP determined that political survival no longer meant just winning elections, but the unconditional submission of the military to the civilian authorities.³⁴¹

³⁴⁰ International Republican Institute/Harris Interactive, "International Republican Institute: Turkish Public Opinion Survey," (International Republican Institute, 2010), 34.

³⁴¹ Hale and Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism*, 156.

In order to institutionalize the formal controls implemented during the early AKP years, the party aggressively pursued investigations into military coup plots; most notable among these were the Ergenekon and Sledgehammer investigations. Together, these inquiries saw hundreds of military members indicted, tried, and jailed for charges of conspiring to overthrow the government.³⁴² Not content to remove only current and recently retired officers, these investigations would also include arrests and indictments against those officers who prosecuted the 1980 coup, including General Kenan Evren, the Chief of General Staff overseeing the 1980 coup and military rule from 1980 to 1983, as well as those military officers responsible for the 1997 February 28 Process and those behind the 1971 “coup by memorandum.”³⁴³

With opinion polls showing public and international support solidly on the side of these investigations, and most formal prerogatives regarding the judiciary previously eliminated, the military was unable to prevent the widespread indictments and trials.³⁴⁴ With commentators observing that the generals had been isolated from public support, and to protest the detention of hundreds of officers, the top four senior military officers resigned in 2011, citing an inability to defend their comrades-in-arms from the judicial process.³⁴⁵ In 1997, during the February 28 Process, the military forced the resignation of the Welfare Party government. After a decade of AKP government, the only path available to the same military was for the generals themselves to resign. As Prime Minister Erdogan calmly replaced the generals with those more amenable to his policies, the institution of subjective civilian control of the military was finally accepted by the TSK.³⁴⁶

³⁴² Soner Cagaptay, *The Rise of Turkey: The Twenty-First Century's First Muslim Power* (Lincoln, NE: Potomac, 2014), 50.

³⁴³ Kenan then served as the first president under the new 1982 constitution until 1989. His election was coupled to the passage of the 1982 constitution and removal of the military regime. In order for the military to return the civilians to power, the public first had to install the military officer as president.

³⁴⁴ Harris Interactive, "International Republican Institute: Turkish Public Opinion Survey," 28.

³⁴⁵ Constanze Letsh, "Turkey Military Chiefs Resign over Sledgehammer 'Coup Plot' Arrests," *The Guardian*, July 30, 2011, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/jul/30/turkey-military-chiefs-resign-sledgehammer>.

³⁴⁶ Başkan, "Accommodating Political Islam," 347.

The remainder of Chapter IV is organized chronologically to illustrate this process of consolidating civilian control. Section B presents the changing domestic and international circumstances that contributed to a period of increased hostility from 2006 to 2007, which eventually resulted in a constitutional crisis over filling the office of president. Section C then depicts the open contestation between the AKP and the TSK, as well as between the AKP and the Chief Prosecutor (the office responsible for bringing closure cases against political parties) that took place between 2007 and 2008. When the closure case against the AKP failed in 2008, the elected and now vindicated AKP pushed aggressive investigations into coup plotting, targeting military officers, civilians, and journalists suspected of attempting to overthrow the government. This 2008–2011 period is detailed in Section D. Finally, Section E assesses the consequences of the coup trials and the state of Turkish civil-military relations as 2011 and the period of contestation and control came to an end.

B. INCREASING HOSTILITY, 2006–2007

As 2006 drew to an end, two fundamental Turkish relationships underwent changes that altered the power dynamics between the military leadership and the civilian politicians. The first relationship change was the retirement of General Hilmi Özkök as the Chief, a position then filled by General Yaşar Büyükanıt. Turkish conservatives had high hopes that this change would halt the progressive momentum that grew under Özkök.³⁴⁷ Under Büyükanıt, several sources of contestation between the AKP and military would arise, including the 2007 presidential election and subsequent constitutional crisis. The new hostility towards the AKP by the Büyükanıt-led TSK demonstrates electoral competitions prediction that particularistic and programmatic incentives will lead to conflict with the military. The resolution of this crisis would mark a turning point for the TSK under Büyükanıt where, before the crisis, the TSK was more hostile to the AKP; after the crisis and with the elevation of Gül to president, the military became muted in challenging the AKP.

³⁴⁷ Ersel Aydinli, “A Paradigmatic Shift for the Turkish Generals and an End to the Coup Era in Turkey,” *Middle East Journal* 63, no. 4 (2009), 591.

The more significant relationship change was that of the European Union and Turkey. Near the end of 2006 and into 2007, this relationship began to deteriorate. The tone of accession talks on each side became more strident, with Turks arguing that major legislative reforms had brought Turkey much closer to EU *acquis*. In Europe, however, discussion began to migrate away from a sense of inevitability on Turkish accession and towards normative discussions on whether Turkey even belonged in Europe, with France and Germany leading the way in overtly viewing Turkey through a religious lens.³⁴⁸ Focus on Turkey as a large, populous, Muslim country, with a lower per-capita income than much of Europe, created cultural backlash among Turks who had, for decades, pursued European integration. As the EU lost luster, the political dynamics inside Turkey changed as well. Politicians were moving beyond political, economic, and military reform in an effort to align with the EU *acquis*, and towards implementing legislation that served the dominant AK party interest.³⁴⁹ Similarly, the decline in EU support also removed an impediment to an active military, and events in the spring of 2007 were driven largely by this active military under Büyükanıt. As interest in EU membership diminished in Turkey and national pride increased, spurred in part by anti-Turkish sentiment in Europe, the conditions became more favorable internally for military intervention, thereby triggering the conflicts between the AKP and the secular establishment of the CHP, TSK, and Constitutional Court.

1. Waning EU–Turkish Relations

The early years of AKP leadership were marked by nationwide enthusiasm on EU accession. After several setbacks on accession, however, Turkish faith in the process and the benefits of membership began to wane.³⁵⁰ The decline in EU–Turkish relations also served as a loss of the catalyst that had helped accelerate early AKP military reforms. Thus, the decline in Turkey–EU relations was important for electoral competition

³⁴⁸ Eric S. Edelman et al., *The Roots of Turkish Conduct: Understanding the Evolution of Turkish Policy in the Middle East* (Washington, DC: Bipartisan Policy Center, 2013), 31.

³⁴⁹ Soner Çağaptay, “Turkey Moves Far Beyond Europe,” *CNN World*, December 22, 2011, <http://globalpublicsquare.blogs.cnn.com/2011/12/22/cagaptay-turkey-moves-far-beyond-europe/>

³⁵⁰ Birol Yeşilada, *EU-Turkey Relations in the 21st Century* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 62.

because the loss of Turkish support for membership meant that pressure for adoption of the EU *acquis* was similarly reduced, including military reforms demanded by the EU. On the civilian side, the accomplished reforms from 2002 to 2006 and the loss of EU leverage gave the civilians the ability to pursue conservative domestic policies targeting issues important to their electoral base; they no longer had to worry about EU input (headscarves being one example). No longer fearing the effects of EU criticism on the Turkish public and with rapidly decreasing voter support for accession, the tie that bound the AKP and TSK together on reforms for much of 2002 to 2006 had been severed. In response, the military under Büyükanıt also proved more willing to attempt a reassertion of military influence in politics following the loss of support for EU accession, including more strident public pronouncements against the civilians, and eventually culminating in a direct effort to influence a presidential election. As the possibility of EU accession and a waxing of public interest had assisted in driving military reform, so too would the waning of public opinion on EU matters drive the growing divide between the military and civilians.

EU support for Turkish accession consists of two styles: (1) materialist supporters, who see Turkish membership as benefiting the Union economically and militarily, and (2) normative supporters, for whom democracy and secularism are EU norms and who focus on the character of Turkish government rather than the benefits of to the EU from Turkish accession.³⁵¹ Beginning in 2004, the latter of these increasingly focused on the difficulty of integrating Turks and Muslims with the largely Christian Europe, and whether Anatolian Turks, whose support had plummeted as terrorism flourished, were properly European.³⁵² The materialist supporters meanwhile consented that, under the AKP, Turkey had made significant progress towards implementing the full *acquis*, and focused instead on the already close relationship between the EU and Turkey,

³⁵¹ H. Tarik Oğuzlu and Burak Bilgehan Zp ek, "Turkey's Europeanization," *International Journal* 63, no. 4 (2008), 104.

³⁵² Michael S. Teitelbaum and Philip L. Martin, "Is Turkey Ready for Europe?" *Foreign Affairs* 82, no. 3 (2003), 103.

such as the NATO alliance, the Customs Union, and the importance of anchoring Turkey in the West.³⁵³

In the end, both parties got what they wanted. EU leaders decided on an “open-ended” negotiation process with Turkey and no guarantees of full membership, despite the level of compliance with the EU *acquis* that Turkey might accomplish. Turkey remained the only country to enter the Customs Union before the EU, and without a promise of a future accession.³⁵⁴ Stringent and unique conditions that were placed on Turkish accession exceeded typical EU accession negotiations, specifically Turkish–Cyprus relations, possible permanent restrictions on Turkish migration throughout the EU, and a potential “privileged partnership” in-lieu of full membership.³⁵⁵ In Turkey, however, decisions to prevent Turkish accession for at least another decade (the Commission stating that accession before 2014 would not be permitted) struck citizens as disingenuous; the states of Central Europe powered through the accession process with economies similar to Turkey’s and with a much shorter history of integration.³⁵⁶

The rejection the Turks felt by the EU accession process immediately led to declining domestic support for EU accession, and by a corollary decline in reforms aimed at *acquis* compliance.³⁵⁷ As the Turkish economy improved under AKP and IMF reforms, the EU became all sticks and few carrots. Without a guaranteed accession after full *acquis* compliance, Turkish public opinion polls on EU membership plummeted.³⁵⁸ From December 2005 to May 2006, Turkish respondents to the question, “Do you have a favorable image of the EU?” dropped from 60 percent favorable to only 43 percent, a

³⁵³ David L. Phillips, “Turkey’s Dreams of Accession,” *Foreign Affairs* 83, no. 5 (2004), 87.

³⁵⁴ Deniz Gökalp and Seda Ünsar, “From the Myth of European Union Accession to Disillusion: Implications for Religious and Ethnic Polarization in Turkey,” *The Middle East Journal* 62, no. 1 (2008), 98.

³⁵⁵ Beken Saatçioğlu, “The EU’s ‘Rhetorical Entrapment’ in Enlargement Reconsidered: Why Hasn’t It Worked for Turkey?” *Insight Turkey* 14, no. 3 (2012), 170.

³⁵⁶ Andreas Staab, *The European Union Explained*, 2nd ed. (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2011), 40.

³⁵⁷ Nathalie Tocci, *Turkey’s European Future: Behind the Scenes of America’s Influence on EU-Turkey Relations* (New York: New York University Press, 2011), 63.

³⁵⁸ Edel Hughes, *Turkey’s Accession to the European Union: The Politics of Exclusion?* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2011), 167.

statistic would that would continue to decline as the EU entered its own fiscal crisis in the latter half of the decade.³⁵⁹ Similarly EU barometer reports in 2008 showed Turkish trust in the EU lower than all other candidate states and member states at 31 percent (EU average 50 percent).³⁶⁰ While influential European leaders such as German Chancellor Angele Merkel and French President Nicolas Sarkozy openly opposed Turkish membership and France criminalized the denial that Armenians were victims of genocide in World War I, Turks reacted with anti-EU rallies across the country.³⁶¹

The decline in Turkish support for the EU cut across party affiliation and economic or social status, and was predominantly based on the negative discourse emanating from Europe towards the possibility of Turkish membership.³⁶² Going into the 2007 presidential elections, Turkey had experienced rapid economic improvement, significant political and military reforms, and major changes to civil society and election pre-polling demonstrated that these advances registered with the voters more than joining the EU, which by then little to no impact on internal politics.³⁶³ The 2007 EU barometer surveys in Turkey found that 76 percent of respondents who were pleased with their quality of life held higher expectations for their future than member states (44 percent versus 37 percent) and had more trust in their government institutions than European states (71 percent versus 41 percent in Europe).³⁶⁴ By 2010, domestic surveys in Turkey showed that fully 50 percent of voters viewed EU membership to have diminished in importance.³⁶⁵ In short, the benefits of EU membership declined, and public perception

³⁵⁹ "Support for EU Plunges in Turkey, Survey Says," *Hurriyet Daily News*, July 7, 2006. <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/support-for-eu-plunges-in-turkey-survey-says.aspx?pageID=438&n=support-for-eu-plunges-in-turkey-survey-says-2006-07-07>

³⁶⁰ European Commission, *Eurobarometer 2008* (Brussels, Belgium: Author, 2008), 3.

³⁶¹ Ali Resul Usul, *Democracy in Turkey: The Impact of EU Political Conditionality* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 166.

³⁶² Alexander Bürgin, "Disappointment or New Strength: Exploring the Declining EU Support among Turkish Students, Academics, and Party Members," *Turish Studies* 13, no. 4 (2012), 571.

³⁶³ ilg ün Arisan Eralp, "The Possibility of a "Transformational Partnership" between Turkey and the EU: Will "Opportunity" Become a Reality?" in *Europe, Turkey and the Mediterranean: Fostering Cooperation and Strengthening Relations* (Berlin, Germany: Bertelsmann Stifung, 2012), 22.

³⁶⁴ European Commission, *Eurobarometer 2007* (Brussels, Belgium: Author, 2007), 2.

³⁶⁵ Bürgin, "Disappointment or New Strength," 573.

of hostility towards Turkish candidacy for identity reasons caused Turks to lose faith in the institution.³⁶⁶

2. Waxing Turkish Nationalism

Public opinion polls from 2006 and 2007 showed low levels of trust and support for the European Union membership by Turks.³⁶⁷ While Turkish support for the EU collapsed, nationalism grew rapidly in Turkey from 2006 to 2007, in part from the anti-Turkish sentiment from the EU.³⁶⁸ This growing nationalism was a product of both internal and external factors as voters across the political spectrum saw European and American policy decisions as directed against Turkey.³⁶⁹ The growth in nationalism led many voters to the right and towards support for traditional Islam in public arenas, and began to create a political environment that would invite the TSK to again test the waters for political intervention.³⁷⁰ Internationally, the failure of the EU to hold the Republic of Cyprus accountable to the Annan Plan (agreed to in 2004 by Turkish Cypriots) and provide an avenue for reconciliation—as agreed to in the Annan Plan—directly assaulted the Turks’ sense of fair play.³⁷¹ Once Cyprus was admitted to the EU in 2004, the Union ceased efforts at neutrality and instead treated Turkish–Cyprus relations as a proxy for Turkish enthusiasm for the EU. Increasing nationalism led to a more active military by stimulating political parties such as the CHP and the MHP that favored a stronger military. The increase in nationalism was important because the coming 2007 elections would determine the outcome of previously enacted military reforms. Would growing

³⁶⁶ Saatçioğlu, “EU’s “Rhetorical Entrapment,”” 171.

³⁶⁷ European Commission, “Eurobarometer 66: Public Opinion in the European Union,” (Brussels, Belgium: European Commission, 2007).

³⁶⁸ Kostas Ifantis, “Turkey in Transition—Opportunities Amidst Peril?” in *Turkey's Road to European Union Membership: National Identity and Political Change*, ed. Susannah Verney and Kostas Ifantis (New York: Routledge, 2009), 17.

³⁶⁹ Zeyno Baran, *Torn Country: Turkey between Secularism and Islamism* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution, 2010), 67.

³⁷⁰ Ibid.

³⁷¹ İyâ n iş, “Conservative Globalists Versus Defensive Nationalists: Political Parties and Paradoxes of Europeanism in Turkey,” in *Turkey's Road to European Union Membership: National Identity and Political Change*, ed. Susannah Verney and Kostas Ifantis (New York: Routledge, 2009), 42.

nationalism turn voters away from the AKP, or would the party adapt strategies and maintain their position in government?

The AKP and supporters took an ironic turn towards increased nationalism themselves after the 2005 European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) decision rejecting an appeal to allow women to wear headscarves on Turkish university campuses. The case had been taken to the ECtHR by conservatives and the AKP with the hopes of receiving a European ruling that freedom of religion, according to European norms, demanded that female students be allowed to wear headscarves. Instead, the increasing European Islamophobia resulting from al-Qaeda and terrorist attacks targeting European countries led to restrictions on Muslim religious freedoms in Europe generally and, following from that, a negative ECtHR ruling against Turkey.³⁷² This rebuff on religious freedom by the ECtHR was all the more problematic for the AKP because the decision pitted EU candidacy and norms against the core AKP constituency of conservative Muslims.³⁷³

Increasing nationalism was not limited to politicians and the public. In 2006, the PKK resumed terrorist attacks against Turkish interests and assets in the southeastern parts of the country, breaking a six-year cease-fire in the process. European Parliament demands that the Turkish government pursue peaceful resolutions with the Kurds further strained relations.³⁷⁴ While the military looked askance at European focus on member states' security interests at the expense of Turkish security, the open violence that broke out triggered the military's strong prerogative in protecting the singular sovereignty of the Republic.³⁷⁵ With military members being killed in southeastern Turkey fighting a new insurrection, plus the EU seemingly disinterested in Turkish security affairs and an electorate disenfranchised by the EU accession process (due to EU failure to uphold the Annan Plan, support religious freedom in Turkey, and the normative discussion of

³⁷² n iş, "Conservative Globalists Versus," 42.

³⁷³ Ibid., 43.

³⁷⁴ Kerim Yildiz, Mark Muller, and Noam Chomsky, *The European Union and Turkish Accession: Human Rights and the Kurds* (London ; Ann Arbor, MI: Pluto Press, 2008). 120.

³⁷⁵ This difference between EU norms and Turkish norms was a continual issue between the EU and Turkey, with the latter's security concerns focused more on domestic security, border security, and foreign aggression, issues largely secured in Western Europe, whose neighborhood is decidedly less dangerous.

Turkish Europeanism), the TSK under Büyükanıt began to test the boundaries of the formal control mechanisms enacted in the previous five years.³⁷⁶

3. The Constitutional Crisis

Beginning in October 2006, the TSK began to signal a growing interest in the domestic political events to come in 2007, with both a presidential election and national parliamentary election set to take place. At the opening session of the Grand National Assembly on October 1, President Sezer warned the members of parliament (still led by the majority AKP): “The danger of Islamist reaction is one of the threats against our internal security...it can be seen that the reactionary threat has not changed its objective of altering the basic characteristics of the state.”³⁷⁷ The following day, Büyükanıt extended this warning with an impassioned speech at the Turkish military academy, criticizing the national police, the AKP, intellectuals, and other parties outside the security establishment. Büyükanıt further dismissed EU criticism of the military’s role in politics and accused the AKP government of engaging in “Islamic reactionism.”³⁷⁸ Future Chief of General Staff Ilker Başbug was also involved in TSK efforts to reassert authority and claimed: “Protecting our republic’s principles has nothing to do with domestic politics. It is a duty given to the armed forces laid down by law. Those who compare the Turkish armed forces with the armies of other countries are not aware of the facts of Turkish society and its history.”³⁷⁹ Between the change from Özkök to Büyükanıt and the loss of EU pressure, the TSK prepared to make 2007 a year of open contestation. The TSK would challenge the reforms yielded to the civilians under Özkök, while maintaining that the office of president should be a bastion of secularism.

Under the 1982 constitution, the Turkish president is elected for a single seven-year term by the parliament from amongst its own members. A maximum of four rounds of elections take place, with a two-thirds majority being necessary in the first two rounds

³⁷⁶ Ifantis, “Turkey in Transition,” 16.

³⁷⁷ Sinan İkinci, “Turkey: A New Military Intervention in the Making,” International Committee of the Fourth International, October 20, 2006, <http://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2006/10/turk-o20.html>.

³⁷⁸ Usul, *Democracy in Turkey*, 151.

³⁷⁹ İkinci, “Turkey: A New Military.”

to successfully elect a president, but only an absolute majority on the last two rounds.³⁸⁰ In practice, the d'Hondt system of representation has necessitated that most governments form by coalition and therefore most presidential nominations a “compromise candidate.” Before 2007, apart from the self-appointed military presidents, only one political party had the means to successfully elect one of their own members and did so with the 1983 election of Turgut Özal. According to Article 102 of the 1982 constitution, failure to produce a majority of votes in the fourth round of elections triggers dissolution of the parliament and new parliamentary elections.³⁸¹ In 2007, the AKP maintained a pure majority just shy of two-thirds of parliamentary seats owing to the 2002 national election results, giving them the ability to nominate and elect one of their own to the office of president. That candidate was former party head Abdullah Gül.

In the run-up to the elections, the minority party CHP actively lobbied other political parties to boycott the election. This was an attempt to deprive the AKP of the necessary votes and force early parliamentary elections, in which the CHP thought they would perform well.³⁸² The first round of elections was held on April 27, when Gül received 357 votes (the AKP held 353 seats) with only 361 deputies present. The CHP then argued that a quorum of 367 members was required for the vote to be valid (184 is required number according to the 1982 constitution) and took the issue to the Constitutional Court in an effort to nullify the vote.³⁸³ Just before midnight on April 27, 2007, the military issued what became known in the press as the “e-coup,” a document on the official TSK website titled “On reactionary Activities, Army’s Duty.”³⁸⁴ As in previous military interventions in politics, the military made clear that their role stood for a certain vision of the state, claiming “it must not be forgotten that the Turkish Armed

³⁸⁰ Özbudun, *Constitutional System of Turkey*, 74.

³⁸¹ GNAT, *Constitution of the Republic of Turkey*, Article 102.

³⁸² Carol Migdalovitz, *u.s. 2007 Election: The Rise of Identity and Power* (CRS Report No. RL34039) (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2007), 3.

³⁸³ The reader will recall that the constitutional court regularly aligns itself with the security establishment of the TSK and CHP, because the judges appointed to its ranks come from the office of President (dominated by the military) and several members are required to come from the military court system. Thus, the CHP had strong reason to believe that the court would in fact invalidate the election.

³⁸⁴ Migdalovitz, *u.s. 2007 Elections*, 4.

Forces do take sides in this debate and are the sure and certain defenders of secularism.”³⁸⁵ The same communiqué also contained the now standard military threat to intervene, claiming that, should circumstances necessitate, the military would display their “position and attitudes.”³⁸⁶

Unlike the Welfare Party experience a decade prior, the AKP directly and publicly challenged the legitimacy of the military to interfere in electoral politics, with party spokesman Cemil Çiçek pointing out that, in democratic Turkey, the constitution demands submission of the military chief of staff to the prime minister.³⁸⁷ Demonstrating a shifting reality in Turkish politics, whereas previous military threats were typically honored by the party in power and cheered by those parties that stood to benefit from the intervention, the 2007 criticism of the military extended beyond just the subject AKP. Both center-right political parties, True Path and Motherland, attacked the legitimacy of military intervention. Even the Republican People’s Party stressed that the electorate, not the military, should handle a presidential election.³⁸⁸ Internationally, both the European Union’s Commission for enlargement and American Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice condemned the military memorandum.³⁸⁹

On May 1, the Constitutional Court ruled in favor of the CHP and Kemalists, breaking with years of parliamentary elections and holding that a quorum of 367 members of parliament was in fact required to validate a presidential election. While the CHP celebrated the verdict and prepared for new elections with an eye to taking back parliament and keeping control of the presidency, the AKP and Prime Minister Erdoğan decried the court decision as a blatant assault on Turkish democracy.³⁹⁰ Though the AKP could have continued with additional rounds of elections until a failed fourth attempt, at this point, the party made a strategic decision to demonstrate a willingness to let the

³⁸⁵ Ibid.

³⁸⁶ Ifantis, “Turkey in Transition,” 17.

³⁸⁷ Banu Eliğur, “The Changing Face of Turkish Politics: Turkey’s July 2007 Parliamentary Elections,” *Middle East Brief* (November 2007), 2.

³⁸⁸ Hale and Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism*, 91.

³⁸⁹ Ibid.

³⁹⁰ Baran, *Torn Country*, 62.

voters decide the issue. Prime Minister Erdoğan called for early parliamentary elections to be held on July 22. Moving the elections up prior to a failed fourth presidential election allowed the assembly to stay in session, a key ingredient to AKP plans for the electoral season while also demonstrating that the party was confident in their standing with the electorate.

C. OPEN CONTESTATION, 2007–2008

The constitutional crisis of 2007 destroyed the illusion that the AKP was politically safe from the TSK and allied political interests in the Constitutional Court and CHP minority. For the AKP, bringing the military to heel became an existential task; politics could not allow both a dominant political party and a dominant politicized military. During 2007 and 2008, the AKP and the military/Kemalists would engage in complicated maneuvers attempting to establish support for their own position and undercut the legitimacy of the opposing institution.

In conjunction with early elections, the AKP civilian politicians pushed new constitutional reforms in direct opposition to the stated positions of both the military and the Kemalist CHP.³⁹¹ These constitutional changes sought to prevent future constitutional crises over presidential nominations by changing the number of votes needed for a quorum. In response, the Constitutional Court (whose membership still included two judges from the military as required by the 1982 constitution) accepted a closure case against the AKP, the chief prosecutor charging the party with violation of the constitutional principles of secularism. When the AKP narrowly avoided political dissolution, the politicians began aggressive pursuit of investigations into military coup planning, which would eventually conclude with the resignations of the heads of each branch of the armed forces in 2011.

1. 2007 National Elections, Constitutional Reforms, and the Presidency

The inability to successfully conclude the presidential election in parliament and the subsequent constitutional crisis precipitated by the CHP challenge to Article 96 of the

³⁹¹ Aknur, “Civil-Military Relations During the AK Party Era,” 139.

constitution allowed Prime Minister Erdoğan to move national elections forward from November to July 2007. Article 77 of the Turkish Constitution requires parliamentary elections every five years, traditionally held in the fall to encourage maximum participation.³⁹² Moving the elections into July would lead to reduced voter turnout due to traditional Turkish summer vacations, but was motivated by twin desires: breaking the presidential deadlock and using the crisis to demonstrate greater voter support for the AKP. By moving the elections into July and pushing constitutional referendums through parliament during the earlier campaign season, the AKP could generate additional support for their policies and therefore greater electoral success.

The spring constitutional crisis motivated the AKP to begin constitutional reforms even before the July elections. Having successfully improved the national economy, extended personal and religious freedoms, and increased formal control over the armed forces during the previous parliamentary session, from 2002 to 2006, the AKP now moved to consolidate those gains permanently and prevent future military challenges. Constitutional changes to the judicial and executive branches of government were key to these efforts. In June, Prime Minister Erdoğan convened a group of constitutional professors to begin drafting a new constitution in line with the AKP election platform and that would add additional controls to the increasingly isolated military.

From the outset, the AKP campaigned on a constitution that advanced the interest of all civilians and was designed as a social contract in line with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights.³⁹³ Ultimately, the goal was to deliver a constitution predicated on the rights of the citizens rather than the rights of the state. The most important changes submitted by the drafting committee targeted those institutions that prevented the voters from exercising broad freedoms that had been hallmarks of legislation enacted by military juntas. In the run-up to the 2007 national elections, civilians were writing a draft constitution without military oversight for the first time since the inception of the Republic in 1923. However, for the

³⁹² GNAT, *Constitution of the Republic of Turkey*, Article 77.

³⁹³ Özbudun, *Constitutional System of Turkey*, 141.

draft constitution to have a chance at receiving a parliamentary vote, the AKP had to first win another election and secure the right to constitute another five-year government.

The July elections featured 14 parties competing for seats in the Grand National Assembly.³⁹⁴ Owing to the 10 percent minimum threshold requirement, several political parties formed official alliances before the elections in order to gain access to parliament for their candidates. Most consequential was the alliance between the Kemalist CHP and the Demokratik Sol Partisi (Democratic Left Party or DSP), which was intended to increase the CHP's ability to stymie AKP initiatives in parliament, and potentially even block the new presidential election that would follow the parliamentary elections.³⁹⁵ The CHP–DSP alliance ran a campaign targeting the qualifications of the AKP for continued leadership, accusing the party of posing an Islamic threat to the republic in addition to the charges of corruption that minority parties consistently accuse governments of in Turkish politics.³⁹⁶ As Figure 3 indicates, of the 14 parties to run candidates, only three crossed the 10 percent threshold to receive seats in parliament.³⁹⁷

Turkish political parties and share of national vote

Political Party (with Turkish abbreviation)	2007 (national)	2009 (local)	2010 (referendum)	2011 (national)
Justice and Development (AKP)	46.66	39	58% in favor	49.83
Republican People's Party (CHP)	20.85	23.23	42% against	25.98
National Action Party (MHP)	14.29	16.13		13
Democratic Party (DP)	5.41	3.71		0.65
Democratic Society Party (DTP)	5.2*	5.41		n/a
Felicity Party (SP)	2.34	5.18		1.27
Independents	5.2	0.36		6.57

Notes: percentages in **bold** indicate that the party crossed the 10% threshold necessary to receive seats in parliament.

*The Democratic Society Party was founded in 2005 and successfully ran 22 members as independents in the 2007 election.

Source: Data provided by the Turkish Statistical Institute. www.turkstat.gov.tr.

Figure 3. Turkish political parties and share of national vote.

³⁹⁴ This number does not include political parties who created alliances with other parties to increase their likelihood of crossing the 10 percent threshold. Such parties are required to formally dissolve themselves and join another party prior to the election. For example, the Democratic Left Party (DSP) dissolved to join the Republican People's Party (CHP) before the election. After the election, seats are then apportioned between members of each party.

³⁹⁵ Eliğur, "Changing Face of Turkish Politics," 4.

³⁹⁶ Ibid.

³⁹⁷ Owing to pre-election alliances a total of eight parties were represented in parliament, however. The DSP seated 13 seats from the CHP-DSP alliance, and candidates representing the Democratic Society Party, Freedom and Solidarity Party, and the Great Union Party ran as independents and also won seats.

Propelled by anti-Kurdish sentiment and having run on a platform of allowing the TSK to completely destroy PKK camps (including those in Iraq), the nationalist Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi (Nationalist Movement Party or MHP) received 14 percent of the national vote and 71 seats in parliament. The CHP–DSP alliance significantly underperformed expectations, garnering just 21 percent of the vote and 112 seats in parliament, a reduction of 66 seats from the previous session. As in 2002, the top party to emerge from the elections was the AKP; their share of the vote increased from 35 to 47 percent.³⁹⁸ For the 2007–2012 session then, the AKP would again enjoy single party government with 62 percent of seats in parliament.

The 2007 elections represent a significant vindication for the AKP, which became the first political party since 1954 to increase its share of the popular vote from one election to the next. While the CHP performed well on the Aegean coast, and the nationalist MHP on the Mediterranean coast, the AKP had parliamentary representatives from every geographic region of the country. In 80 of 81 provinces, voters elected an AKP parliamentarian; only the predominantly Alevi Tunceli province failed to send an AKP deputy.³⁹⁹ The 2007 elections also continued the trend of growing geographical AKP support, beginning in the west in 2002 and creeping east across the country, spanning from border to border by 2007.⁴⁰⁰ Thus, despite losing parliamentary seats, the election results demonstrated the first truly national political party recent Turkish history.

William Hale asserts that, while a major popular endorsement of AKP policies and performance from the previous five years (especially economic performance), the 2007 elections represented a stunning rebuke of the CHP and their election platform.⁴⁰¹ Of importance to the voters was the constitutional crisis revolving around the presidency, with a majority of voters claiming that the office of president was the most important

³⁹⁸ While the AKP could claim success in having increased their portion of the popular vote, the party did suffer a net loss of 23 (341 versus 363 in the 2002 session) seats in parliament, owing to the MHP crossing the minimum threshold.

³⁹⁹ Henri J. Barkey and Yasemin Çongar, “Deciphering Turkey’s Elections: The Making of a Revolution,” *World Policy Journal* 24, no. 3 (2007), 65.

⁴⁰⁰ Akarca and Başlevent, “Persistence in Regional Voting,” 198.

⁴⁰¹ Hale and Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism*, 41.

issue of the election.⁴⁰² That is, would the military and minority party CHP be able to prevent the AKP from nominating and electing a president of their choosing despite significant voter support? Finally, by rebuking the military after the April 27 memorandum, which threatened military intervention in presidential elections, and forcing its removal from the TSK website, the AKP demonstrated a confidence that national elections would return the party to power.

The AKP had successfully campaigned on both their previous record in government as well as the promise to permanently alter the presidency to become more accountable to the people rather than other government institutions, such as the military. Indeed the military's decision to intervene in the presidential process proved to be a serious miscalculation. While respectful of the military as an institution, voters had always voted against military backed politicians at the first opportunity following each of the 1960, 1971, 1980, and 1997 interventions.⁴⁰³ Most important for the AKP—as the party had publicly and directly challenged the authority and prerogative of the military during the constitutional crisis—the overwhelming election results for the party enabled AKP to bring the full weight of their political mandate to bear against the TSK following the elections. In the coming years, however, the military was reduced to quiet protest while the civilians curtailed military influence in both domestic and foreign policy areas.⁴⁰⁴ One description from the spring and summer of 2007 depicted a contest between the AKP and the military for the fate of the country, with the winner becoming the de facto sovereign and the loser permanently marginalized and without a national voice.⁴⁰⁵

Having successfully increased their percentage of the vote following the dramatic economic turnaround of the previous several years, the new AKP government immediately used their political support to renew the very issue that caused the original constitutional crisis and necessitated early elections: the nomination of AKP Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Gül to the office of President of the Republic. Parliamentary

⁴⁰² Ibid.

⁴⁰³ Barkey and Çongar, “Deciphering Turkey's Elections,” 66.

⁴⁰⁴ Aknur, “Impact of Civil-Military Relations,” 239.

⁴⁰⁵ Hale and Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism*, 41.

elections for the Gül nomination began on August 28, 2007, and initially looked similar to the previous election months. In rounds one and two, when a two-thirds vote by parliament is required, the vote failed. On the third round, by simple majority (held commandingly by the AKP with 62 percent of parliamentary votes), Abdullah Gül was declared the eleventh president of the Republic of Turkey.

Upon confirmation, Gül also became the first openly Islamist president, as well as the first president to have his inauguration boycotted by the military on the grounds that Gül was not representative of the secular state. The opposition party CHP chairman also boycotted the ceremony, believing the Gül election represented a departure from the traditional role of president as outside party politics. For the AKP and supporters, securing the office of president was a major accomplishment in Turkish civil-military relations.⁴⁰⁶ Any political party with a pure majority of parliamentary seats was constitutionally able to secure a president from their political party; however, in those cases where the party might have done so and the military challenged a candidate, the party in power acquiesced, nominating instead a candidate from another party or from the military itself. The inauguration of Gül as president represented the first time a majority party pushed a party member successfully past the combined opposition of the military and other political parties. With a majority government under the prime minister and a party member as president, the civilian politicians of the AKP enjoyed an unprecedented ability to pass legislation without fear of provoking a presidential veto.

The Turkish president enjoys significant veto and nomination authority as a result of the expansion of presidential powers in the 1982 constitution. However, Turkey's parliamentary system does not imbue the president with unilateral power to act alone in executive matters.⁴⁰⁷ Recalling that the 1982 constitution was crafted under military supervision and that passage of the constitution was coupled with the election of coup leader General Kenan Evren as president, the document granted extensive powers to the

⁴⁰⁶ Yaprak Gürsoy, "The Final Curtain for the Turkish Armed Forces? Civil-Military Relations in View of the 2011 General Elections," *Turkish Studies* 13, no. 2 (2012), 194.

⁴⁰⁷ David Shankland, "Islam and Politics in Turkey: The 2007 Presidential Elections and Beyond," *International Affairs* 83, no. 2 (2007), 358.

office of president in all aspects of government: executive, legislative, and judicial.⁴⁰⁸ Section “b” describes the wide breadth of executive prerogatives available to the president, which include presiding over the Council of Ministers, mobilization of the armed forces, appointing a chief of the General Staff, calling and presiding over the National Security Council, appointing and directing the activities of the state Supervisory Council (in charge of investigations), and appointing members of the Higher Education Council.

Legislatively, the president has the authority to veto laws and promulgate laws, but the most important power is the ability to appeal to the Constitutional Court for annulment of laws or provisions therein, effectively giving the president the ability to appeal laws before the Constitutional Court that the president was unable to permanently block.⁴⁰⁹ When the president has been a former military officer or sympathetic to the military, this power has effectively rendered reform efforts toothless. Anything legislated by parliament could be undone at the Constitutional Court and, owing to the original construction of the court, frequently was.⁴¹⁰

While most democracies enjoy a form of checks and balances, Article 104, Section “c” of the 1982 constitution also grants the president substantial judicial authority, specifically the powers to:

Appoint the members of the Constitutional Court, one-fourth of the members of the Council of State, the Chief Public Prosecutor and the Deputy Chief Public Prosecutor of the High Court of Appeals, the members of the Military High Court of Appeals, the members of the Supreme Military Administrative Court and the members of the Supreme Council of Judges and Public Prosecutors.⁴¹¹

⁴⁰⁸ Özbudun, *Constitutional System of Turkey*, 77.

⁴⁰⁹ GNAT, *Constitution of the Republic of Turkey*, Article 104, Section A.

⁴¹⁰ Originally constructed in 1961 in the aftermath of the 1960 coup, the Turkish Constitutional Court was one of Europe’s earliest, and remains one of its strongest. Essentially crafted by the military and state elites of the CHP, the court was designed to provide protection against elected majorities (such as the Democrat Party governing during the coup). Since inception, the court has acted as an additional layer of protection for the secularism and a strong unitary state. For more, see Ergun Özbudun, “The Turkish Constitutional Court and Political Crisis,” in *Democracy, Islam, and Secularism in Turkey*, ed. Ahmet T. Kuru and Alfred Stepan (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).

⁴¹¹ GNAT, *Constitution of the Republic of Turkey*, Article 104, Section C.

That is, the president has the power to refer legislation passed against their veto to the Constitutional Court for review, the members of which court the president also appoints. In addition to appointing judges, the president also appoints public prosecutors; specifically those charged with bringing closure cases against political parties to the Constitutional Court.

As the military has effectively maneuvered their own member into the presidency multiple times since multi-party elections began—and as the language of Article 104 represented the express desires of the military and future President General Kenan Evren—the judicial provisions in Article 104 become even more powerful (and perpetual) bastions of potential military control in politics. When the military overthrew governments and installed a pliable president (or a recently retired officer), that president could then appoint Constitutional Court judges and prosecutors who would pursue the political purposes of the military. Rather than the apolitical institution envisioned by Turkish constitution, the office of president represented a key part of military tutelage over civilian political parties. For all of these reasons, securing the office of president by the civilian AKP in the face of a concerted and multi-pronged attack by opposition forces represented a colossal victory for civil-military relations and the AKP as a political party. The AKP pushed a candidate against the express wishes of both the opposition CHP and the TSK, lost a constitutional court case regarding the necessary quorum, held early elections, then pushed the same candidate again—after increasing their share of the vote by 12 percent—and eventually won control of the presidency.

After again earning the right to form a government without coalition partners, the AKP delivered the proposed constitutional reforms in August 2007. Not surprisingly, the major changes aimed at reducing the role of the military in politics by curtailing the power of the president, changing the way that appointments are made to the Constitutional Court, and making it much more difficult to ban political parties.⁴¹² If passed, the new reforms would alter the presidency to be elected by a popular vote rather than a parliamentary vote to a renewable five-year term (as opposed to a seven-year non-

⁴¹² Özbudun, *Constitutional System of Turkey*, 142.

renewable). Simultaneously, the reforms would transfer many of the nominating powers of the president to parliament, chief among those being seats on the Constitutional Court, the High Council of Judges and Public Prosecutors. In addition to making it more difficult to ban political parties, the 2007 constitutional reforms also recommended abolishing the provision that party members in a closed party also automatically receive an individual five-year ban.⁴¹³ In efforts to increase popular participation (thereby keeping the government accountable to voters and increasing electoral competition) governments would be shortened from five-year to four-year terms of office, and parliament would require only a quorum of one-third for all sessions and decisions (directly targeting the ability of minority parties to force additional parliamentary elections).⁴¹⁴ On October 21, these changes were approved by referendum.⁴¹⁵

Collectively, these reforms aimed at continuing the accretion of power from the Kemalist institutions towards the elected parliament, thereby allowing the AKP (and future parties) additional formal control over the armed forces.⁴¹⁶ Having lost the elections and the presidency, only one avenue remained for those parties targeted in the AKP reform recommendations: a closure case against the AKP before the Constitutional Court. Regardless of the election results or presidential election, a successful closure case would ban the party and members, and hand the government to the minority political parties.

On February 27, 2008, the prosecutor filed suit before the Constitutional Court to overturn two recently passed constitutional amendments that lifted the headscarf ban on university campuses. The ratification of these amendments by the AKP and President Gül handed the secular Kemalists the ammunition needed to pursue a closure case. On March 14, 2008, the chief public prosecutor filed a case before the Constitutional Court to ban the AKP, including the prime minister and the president, as well as another 40 AKP

⁴¹³ Ibid.

⁴¹⁴ Commission of the European Communities, *Turkey 2007 Progress Report*, (Brussels: 2007), 6.

⁴¹⁵ The passage of these reforms is why Turkish national elections took place in 2002, 2007, and 2011 of the AKP decade, with the 2011 election shortened to the four-year cycle.

⁴¹⁶ Burhanettin Duran, "Understanding the AK Party's Identity Politics: A Civilizational Discourse and Its Limitations," *Insight Turkey* 15, no. 1 (2013), 98.

members of parliament.⁴¹⁷ A successful case would effectively destroy the AKP and Turkish government, and likely lead to significant rollbacks on the control mechanisms established over the military during the previous six years.

The eleven judges of the Constitutional Court met daily during the last week of July, attempting to reach a verdict while the public and international community waited to see if a popularly elected government would be dissolved by the very court the government was attempting to reform; many observers were holding that a closure verdict would lead to political chaos.⁴¹⁸ The case was described as a “war for power unfortunately bordering on civil war” between the elected AKP and the secular establishment supported by the CHP—and ultimately benefitting an independent military.⁴¹⁹ As seven judges were necessary for a closure verdict, and eight of the eleven presiding judges were appointed by staunchly secularist President Ahmet Sezer (replaced by Gül in 2007), many suspected that the dissolution of the AKP and government was imminent.⁴²⁰

On July 30, 2008, the Constitutional Court voted 10 to 1 that the AKP was guilty of being a “focal point of anti-secular activities,” and cut public funding for the party by 50 percent.⁴²¹ The only vote against cutting funding was cast by the president of the Constitutional Court Haşim Kılıç. More critically, Kılıç also cast the last outstanding vote on closing the party on July 30, two full days after the other ten judges had cast their own votes. Kılıç voted against closure, and with his vote the tally stood at 6 votes for closure and 5 against. With a 7–4 verdict required for closing a political party, the AKP survived by one judicial vote an existential threat against the party at the peak of their electoral

⁴¹⁷ Carol Migdalovitz, *Turkey: Update on Crisis of Identity and Power* (CRS Report No. RL34646) (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2008), 3.

⁴¹⁸ “Top Court in Action on Closure as PM Calls for National Unity,” *Hurriyet Daily News*, July 28, 2008, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/top-court-in-action-on-closure-as-pm-calls-for-national-unity.aspx?pageID=438&n=top-court-in-action-on-closure-as-pm-calls-for-national-unity-2008-07-28>

⁴¹⁹ Yusuf Kanli, “Will the Crisis Be Over?” *Hurriyet Daily News*, July 31, 2008, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/will-the-crisis-be-over.aspx?pageID=438&n=will-the-crisis-be-over-2008-07-31>.

⁴²⁰ Migdalovitz, *Turkey: Update on Crisis*, 3.

⁴²¹ Mirela Bogdani, *Turkey and the Dilemma of Eu Accession: When Religion Meets Politics*, Library of European Studies (London: I.B. Tauris, 2011), 155.

support, and directly contributed to the increasingly hostile tone that the AKP would take with the security establishment.⁴²²

In hindsight, it would be difficult to overstate the ramifications of 2007–2008 for Turkish civil-military relations. In the face of every institutional challenge erected by the military following previous interventions, the civilian AKP emerged victorious, riding a growing wave of electoral support. The party survived a constitutional crisis surrounding presidential elections, stood up to a military intervention attempting to dictate the terms of the presidential election, and won an overwhelming victory in national elections. The party also won support for additional constitutional reforms and survived a constitutional court case challenging the very right of the party to remain in politics. Significantly, each of these victories occurred without consideration for EU accession (support for which had previously waned) and in the face of an increasingly nationalistic social setting. Electoral competition would expect, following this series of electoral victories, that the AKP would increase their control and push for additional military reforms. What actually happened was that the AKP emerged from the challenges of 2007–2008 increasingly determined to put the threat of military intervention permanently behind them, and to consolidate Turkish civil-military relations to permanently favor elected politicians.⁴²³ The opportunity to accomplish both was handed to the AKP in the form of a devastating revelation of military coup plans against the government, the so-called Ergenekon investigations.

D. CONSEQUENCES, 2007–2011

In Turkish lore, Ergenekon was a mythical valley that sheltered ancestral Turks until they were led out by the grey wolf Asena. In modern Turkish history, Ergenekon is the largest corruption investigation in Turkish history, examining military coup plots against civilian governments, specifically the AKP. What began in 2007 blossomed into wide-ranging probes that have indicted military leaders and even former presidents.

⁴²² İyâ n i ş, “Sharing Power: Turkey’s Democratization Challenge in the Age of the AKP Hegemony,” *Insight Turkey* 15, no. 2 (2013), 114.

⁴²³ Hatem Ete et al., *Politics in 2012* (Istanbul, Turkey: Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research [SETA], 2013), 14.

Following the contestation between the AKP and the secular security sector in 2007 and 2008, the focus of the AKP politicians moved towards permanently removing the threat of a military coup from Turkey. To accomplish that task, the government empowered Ergenekon investigators to leave no stone unturned, and in the process, completely upended the balance of civil-military relations, this time permanently in favor of the civilians. In their prosecution of coup plots, the AKP government also correctly read popular outrage in society over the relationship between previous governments, the military, and organized crime, as was uncovered after the Sursurluk scandal discussed in Chapter II. The popular notion of a “Deep State” consisting of elites in the military, government, and institutions whose aim was to perpetuate the Kemalist state at all costs was a popular fixture during the coup trials and elections held in 2007 and 2011.⁴²⁴ Indeed, the Ergenekon trials themselves were originally presented as a necessary challenge to the “Deep State” apparatus.⁴²⁵ As a party formed after and apart from the scandals, elected specifically to combat government corruption in 2002, the AKP was able to parlay fears of the “Deep State” and anger over coup plans—as well as civil unrest from the assassination of journalist Hrant Dink by a Turkish nationalist—into voter support for the party.

Shortly after the parliamentary elections in 2011 delivered an unprecedented third consecutive victory for the AKP, with a still-increasing percentage of the vote, the four most senior commanders in the Turkish Armed Forces would collectively resign over the ongoing coup investigations. After a decade in power, the AKP had not only won six consecutive elections in resounding fashion, but had survived every assault possible and had so forcefully taken control of the military that the chiefs of services tendered to civilians what they had previously demanded from civilians—resignation.

⁴²⁴ Dağ, *Turkey: Between Democracy and Militarism*, 21.

⁴²⁵ nış, “Sharing Power,” 107.

1. Ergenekon and Sledgehammer (Balyoz): Investigations and Implications

Ergenekon began in June 2007 when a cache of hand-grenades, fuses, and TNT molds were discovered in a Trabzon residence rented by ultra-nationalists. Subsequent raids of former military officers and non-commissioned officers uncovered additional weapons and high explosives. The purpose of Ergenekon was to provide a continuous ability to execute coups against civilian governments, specifically that of the AKP.⁴²⁶ Ergenekon symbolized the institutionalization of the February 28 Process, a permanent infrastructure for maintaining military control over political processes.⁴²⁷ The effort included the assistance of hundreds, if not thousands, of senior military officers and allied civilian experts in the media, academia, and legal system. As the investigations continued, press reports sourcing those close to the investigation linked the grenades to terrorist attacks on national/secularist institutions and media outlets, contributing to the thesis that the nationalists were targeting their own allies in order to cast doubt on conservatives.⁴²⁸ Owing to the rapidity that the investigations were moving, the first indictment against Ergenekon conspirators, lodged in July 2008, was riddled with inconsistencies, mistakes, and ran over 2,000 pages. While the pro-AKP media lauded the investigations, initial evidence of widespread conspiracies to commit coups against the government was thin.⁴²⁹

Investigations and raids continued alongside the presidential elections, constitutional referendums, and the AKP closure case, and accelerated after the conclusion of the latter. In March 2009, a second indictment of over 1,900 pages brought charges of conspiracy against dozens of nationalists, again with mostly circumstantial evidence and without a “smoking-gun.” In most cases, raids were conducted in the middle of the night, and suspects were held without legal counsel for lengthy periods

⁴²⁶ Hakkı Taş, “Turkey's Ergenekon Imbrolio and Academia's Apathy,” *Ibid.*, 16, no. 1 (2014), 163.

⁴²⁷ *Ibid.*, 175.

⁴²⁸ Gareth Jenkins, “Between Fact and Fantasy: Turkey's Ergenekon Investigation” (Washington, D.C.: Central Asia-Caucasus Institute-Silk Road Studies Program, 2009), 37.

⁴²⁹ *Ibid.*, 56.

while undergoing police interrogation.⁴³⁰ Despite these complaints, future appeals to the European Court of Human Rights, asserting that suspects were denied fair trials, were rejected by the court, which recognized Ergenekon as a terrorist organization attempting to overthrow the government.”⁴³¹

As investigations expanded, each raid and discovery yielded intelligence leading to the next link in the chain, with hundreds of journalists, military personnel, and others arrested in conjunction with Ergenekon. Advocates of the investigations cited the 2004 discovery of the former naval forces commander’s diaries that listed a multitude of coup plans; using titles such as “Blond Girl” and “Moonlight,” the plans were crafted alongside the land and air forces commanders and with the assistance of the gendarmerie.⁴³² Virtually anything related to the armed forces came under increasing scrutiny as investigators spent years researching computer files, wire-taps, and personal diaries. Searches of the homes of former military flag officers suspected of association with Ergenekon revealed detailed documents outlining plans to use private security firms for intelligence purposes, and linked the Turkish Armed Forces Assistance Center (OYAK) to illegal surveillance.⁴³³ In addition to the intervention plans themselves, the military also laid the groundwork for explaining to both the domestic and international audience why a coup was enacted. To this end, propaganda campaigns utilizing university conferences, news articles, and websites were financed by the military to help generate the public sentiment necessary to intervene.⁴³⁴ By crafting plans to “prepare the battlefield” for intervention, the military contradicted historical claims that the TSK only

⁴³⁰ Rubin, “Erdogan, Ergenekon,” 4.

⁴³¹ Emre Demir, “European Court Says Turkey’s Ergenekon Arrests Legal,” *Today’s Zaman*, February 10, 2012, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-271019-european-court-says-turkeys-ergenekon-arrests-legal.html>.

⁴³² Aknur, “Civil-Military Relations During the AK Party Era,” 140.

⁴³³ Fazli Mert and Bayram Kaya, ““Did Ergenekon Found OYAK SGS?’ Police Ask Suspect,” *Today’s Zaman*, January 24, 2012, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-269471-did-ergenekon-found-oyak-sgs-police-ask-suspect.html>.

⁴³⁴ Bulent Korucu, “Summary of the Last Decade: Ergenekon Case,” *Today’s Zaman*, August 7, 2013, <http://www.todayszaman.com/columnist/bulent-korucu-322947-summary-of-last-decade-ergenekon-case.html>.

intervened when necessary to preserve social order, instead showing that the military was willing to incite social unrest in order to justify interventions.

The ever-increasing scope of the Ergenekon investigations continued to prompt new allegations. In 2009, the first three investigations were merged into a single court case. Additional cases, such as the 2006 murder of a Council of State judge, the Action Plan Against Reactionaryism, and an anti-government Internet campaign all made their way to the courtroom. In 2012, each of these and more were merged into one massive Ergenekon trial of 256 suspects held before the 13th High Criminal Court.⁴³⁵

The complexities of Ergenekon grew such that a delineation was made to split the investigations into two cases: the first regarding an clandestine network imbedded within the existing military structure aiming to remove governments (Ergenekon); the second, including efforts aimed at inciting civil disobedience in order to justify intervention, was titled Balyoz (Sledgehammer).⁴³⁶ Plans for Sledgehammer included targeting mosques during Friday prayers, assassinations, and even initiating conflict with Greece, each with the intent to demonstrate a civilian government unable to control events and therefore necessitating a military intervention. Despite strong opposition to a politicized military, Turks generally found Ergenekon unsurprising and perhaps uninteresting.⁴³⁷ Activist militaries with four successful coups under their belt do not simply melt away into an apolitical barracks lifestyle. Sledgehammer, however, was of a uniquely different nature. Targeting the very individuals that a military is charged with protecting in order to effect political outcomes represented a complete anathema to the public, and had a crushing effect on public opinion of the military.⁴³⁸

⁴³⁵ Zeynep Zeynep, "256 Suspects Tried," May 7, 2012, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-279673-256-suspects-tried-in-merged-ergenekon-trial.html>.

⁴³⁶ Aknur, "Civil-Military Relations During the AK Party Era," 140.

⁴³⁷ Hakkı Taş, "Turkey's Ergenekon Imbroglio and Academia's Apathy," *Insight Turkey* 16, no. 1 (2014), 164.

⁴³⁸ Aknur, "Civil-Military Relations During the AK Party Era," 140.

2. 2009 Local Elections and 2010 Constitutional Referendum: AKP Maintains Control

Under the shadow of the Ergenekon and Sledgehammer trials, local elections held in 2009 continued the AKP streak of four consecutive elections as the preferred party. As in 2005, the 2009 elections saw a wider spread of votes across political parties than the 2002 and 2007 national elections. As local elections serve to fill municipal political roles, this vote spread is not really surprising. What is important was the continuing prevalence of support for the AKP despite enormous international and domestic crises from Iraq and Afghanistan, PKK violence, internal military insurrections, an international financial crisis, and secular versus Islamic domestic unrest. In a country where elections frequently sport over two dozen parties to choose from, that the AKP received a percentage of the vote equal to the next highest two parties combined is not insignificant. And, as Hypothesis #1 and electoral competition predicts, each of these elections increased the ability of the AKP to pursue preferred policies and to increase control over the Turkish Armed Forces, indeed the most critical aspect of the 2010 constitutional referendum were expanding the authority of the parliament and President in order to prevent military interference.⁴³⁹

As the 2007 elections showed the CHP and the TSK that Turks still preferred AKP governance (even if that mean an associated pious Muslim as President), the 2009 elections demonstrated that the electorate had not broken faith with the AKP over the aggressive trials against military officers charged with coup plots. Overall, the percent of the vote from the 2007 national to the 2009 local elections were remarkably similar, with the CHP and the MHP increasing their vote share by a few percentage points at AKP expense. Essentially, the 2009 elections proved neither a ringing endorsement of the AKP and Ergenekon investigations, nor a vindication of the military and allied parties such as the CHP. As the party in power, however, the AKP could still claim that voters approved of their leadership more than the next two parties combined.

⁴³⁹ Burak Bilgehan Özpek, "Constitution-Making in Turkey after the 2011 Elections," *Turkish Studies* 13, no. 2 (2012), 161.

On the heels of the 2009 local elections and during the ongoing coup trials, Turks had yet another opportunity to express support or disapproval for key AKP policies, this time one of the most significant in the entire AKP period. In September 2010, Turks took to the polls for the AKP-proposed constitutional referendum, which voters passed with 58 percent of the vote in favor of changes aimed at increasing democratic freedoms and further eroding military privilege.⁴⁴⁰ The most important changes in the referendum targeted the judiciary branch, increasing the power of the president and parliament over the appointment of judges to the highest courts, thereby reducing the grip that the military and secularists had maintained for decades. Though the vote initially seemed to match typical national elections, with the heartland and rural areas in favor and the coastal elite areas against AKP initiatives, later reviews of the voting patterns reflected a less polarized electorate. Even in those regions that appeared to vote against the constitutional referendum, nearly 40 percent of the voters still voted for the constitutional changes. Generally speaking, support for the constitutional changes existed nationwide, with some geographical locations (central Anatolia) more supportive than others.⁴⁴¹

While elections in general can be considered a referendum on the performance of a specific political party or candidate, and occasionally reflect support for an issue or platform. According to Burak Özpek however, the 2010 constitutional referendum was always about expanding democratization and limiting the role of the military and security sector elites.⁴⁴² In interpreting the meaning of the constitutional referendum results, there could be no confusion; the voters chose to change their constitution to diminish the role of the military and increase the power of elected representatives. Against the backdrop of coup trials, Turks spoke decidedly against a politically active military.

⁴⁴⁰ “Turkey’s Constitutional Referendum: Erdogan Pulls It Off,” *The Economist*, September 13, 2010, 1.

⁴⁴¹ “Two-Colored Analysis of Turkish Referendum Turns Multihued,” *Hurriyet Daily News*, September 24, 2010. <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/two-colored-analysis-of-turkish-referendum-turns-multihued.aspx?pageID=438&n=by-a-closer-look-the-referendum-did-not-seperate-turkey-geographically-2010-09-24>.

⁴⁴² Özpek, “Constitution-Making in Turkey,” 161.

3. Coup Trials: Past Meets Present

What began in 2008 would not conclude until 2013, and what began with a cache of grenades and a plot to overthrow the AKP would blossom into an indictment against a half-century history of military interventions in government. From the outset of the Ergenekon and Sledgehammer trials, some made the case that the investigations were politically motivated and lacked credible evidence of senior military officers leading counter-government movements within the military.⁴⁴³ As the investigations expanded, however, prosecutors gained access to new files and continued to find linkages between coup plots, anti-government propaganda campaigns, and military leadership. With over half of all Turkish admirals and a tenth of all army generals imprisoned by 2012, it was inevitable that some implicated would have knowledge of events and share information that would help prosecutors build cases against other accused.⁴⁴⁴

In 2010, the prosecution achieved one such breakthrough. A 2003 report detailing aspects of Sledgehammer, thought to be destroyed per military routine, was instead found stored in Turkish military archives.⁴⁴⁵ In another incident during the Sledgehammer trial in 2011, Lt. General Tevfik Zeki Kılıç testified that, during a 2003 seminar, plans titled “martial law plan,” “rear area security plan,” and “state of emergency security plan” for post-coup management were discussed—instead of the official military plans that the seminar publicized.⁴⁴⁶ Later in 2011, a female civilian suspect who applied to the military as a sociologist described being forced by the military to monitor and support anti-government propaganda websites to undermine AKP credibility.⁴⁴⁷ In addition to testimony, official files provided to the chief prosecutor also yielded significant evidence

⁴⁴³ Gareth H. Jenkins, *War, Peace, and the Middle East* (Washington, DC: Central Asia-Caucasus Institute-Silk Road Studies Program, 2009), 59.

⁴⁴⁴ Aknur, “Civil-Military Relations During the AK Party Era,” 140.

⁴⁴⁵ “Missing Sledgehammer Report in Turkish Military’s ‘Cosmic Room,’” *Hurriyet Daily News*, August 5, 2010. <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/missing-sledgehammer-report-in-turkish-militarys-cosmic-room.aspx?pageID=438&n=missing-8216sledgehammer8217-seminar-plan-in-8216cosmic-room8217-2010-08-05>

⁴⁴⁶ Metin Çolak, “Coup Suspect Confesses to Discussing Coup at 2003 Seminar,” *Zaman*, February 10, 2012. <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-271042-coup-suspect-confesses-to-discussing-coup-at-2003-seminar.html>.

⁴⁴⁷ Ibid.

of the plots, including signed military plans for the “Action Plan against Reactionaryism,” detailing one of several named Ergenekon coup plots previously identified from naval diaries.⁴⁴⁸

As evidence increased and suspects packed Turkish military prisons, some defendants initiated appeals to the European Court of Human Rights on the grounds that evidence was inadmissible, arrest warrants were incorrectly processed, and the prosecution had overstepped legal jurisdiction.⁴⁴⁹ The ECtHR accepted and reviewed nearly thirty such appeals, and in each case determined that no violation of the European Convention on Human Rights had been violated.⁴⁵⁰ The European ruling reinforced the domestic view that the coup trials were legitimate and necessary in order to root out the elements within the TSK that viewed military interventions as an acceptable domestic role for the armed forces.

4. 2011 National Elections and Civil-Military Relations: Resignation

Before the headlines on the constitutional referendum election could run out, Turks were again subjected to a campaign season. This time it was for the June 2011 parliamentary elections, the first since the special elections necessitated by the constitutional crisis of 2007. In 2002 and 2007, opposition parties expected greater voter support and underestimated how well the AKP would perform. In 2011, however, most analysts expected a third consecutive AKP government.⁴⁵¹ In a now common occurrence for elections and the AKP, the 2011 vote was yet again unprecedented in Turkish political history when the AKP became the first political party ever to win three consecutive elections while increasing their share of the vote each election. As in 2002 and 2007, voters granted the AKP a majority of parliamentary seats, the ability to form a

⁴⁴⁸ Genç, “Evidence Sent to Court.”

⁴⁴⁹ Markar Esayan, “Ergenekon: An Illegitimate Form of Government,” *Insight Turkey* 15, no. 4 (2013), 37.

⁴⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁵¹ Ben Esen and Sinan Ciddi, “Turkey's 2011 Elections: An Emerging Dominant Party System?” *Middle East Review of International Affairs (MERIA) Journal* 15, no. 3 (September 2011), 2.

single-party government, and did so with a vote percentage far in excess of that cast for other political parties.

Counting local, special, and constitutional elections, the 2011 elections increased to six the number of opportunities voters had to approve or rebuke the AKP. Each time they chose the former, prompting a frenzy of literature dedicated to analyzing the enormity of the AKP decade and what the future of Turkish politics might look like.⁴⁵² In 2011, the AKP received the most votes in 71 of 81 provinces and, for the first time ever, won the highest share of votes in all of the country's seven voting regions.⁴⁵³ This geographical presence not only meant increased political support for the AKP, but also placed serious limitations on the ability of regionalized opposition parties to increase support at AKP expense, giving the AKP a significant advantage in the competition to stay in power.⁴⁵⁴ The 2011 elections also continued the trend of shifting power from the coastal cities to the Anatolian heartland. This area offered greater access to state resources as the AKP consolidated and expanded electoral support and rewarded those voting blocs that had been the backbone for the party since 2002.⁴⁵⁵ In the Southeast of the country, the oft-underrepresented Kurdish voter also showed significant AKP support, stemming from the party's previous willingness to expand civil society to include Kurdish language, education, and broadcasting rights, often in the face of military opposition.⁴⁵⁶ Regardless of the challenges placed before them—by the TSK, the Kemalist CHP, or other secular institutions—in each case, the AKP was able to overcome the threat through a combination of political savvy and persistent voter support.

⁴⁵² Entire special issues were written and published in short order after the 2011 elections with titles such as "The Issues and Consequences of the 2011 Turkish Elections." Most were more than simply descriptions of the electoral conditions that led to the victory and focused on what a dominant party system might mean for EU relations, Kurdish relations, the NATO alliance, the Turkish economy, and other related political issues. See *Turkish Studies* 13, no. 2 (2012) for more insight.

⁴⁵³ Esen and Ciddi, "Turkey's 2011 Elections," 5.

⁴⁵⁴ Güneş Murat Tezcür, "Trends and Characteristics of the Turkish Party System in Light of the 2011 Elections," *Turkish Studies* 13, no. 2 (June 2012), 129.

⁴⁵⁵ İyâ nış, "The Triumph of Conservative Globalism: The Political Economy of the AKP Era," *Turkish Studies* 13, no. 2 (June 2012), 146.

⁴⁵⁶ Nil S. Şatana, "The Kurdish Issue in June 2011 Elections: Continuity or Change in Turkey's Democratization?" *Turkish Studies* 13, no. 2 (June 2012), 185.

Having lost every effort to prevent the AKP from placing the military under a civilian boot, and in the face of mounting adversity for military personnel stemming from the Ergenekon and Sledgehammer investigations, multiple indictments, hundreds of arrests, and with no end in sight, in July 2011, the chiefs of the general staff, the army, the navy, and the air force all resigned in protest. The resignations came just hours after the 13th Court for Serious Crimes accepted the indictment demanding a life sentence for the General Hüseyin Nusrat Taşdeler, commander of the Aegean army, for links to Ergenekon.⁴⁵⁷ Some pundits claimed the end of the coup era over, but this claim had been made prior to the transitions from military to civilian control.⁴⁵⁸

Whether in 1972, 1983, or 1997, each time an analysts would claim that Turkey had moved beyond the point of democratization, wherein coups were no longer tolerated, the TSK successfully executed additional interventions. Political parties were banned and new rules promulgated to preserve military tutelage. What each of those periods lacked was a change in formal controls, followed by a demonstration of civilian strength that would actually legitimize claims of an end to the coup era. Unlike those previous occurrences, the July 2011 resignations were not an independent example of civilian authority, but merely the latest in decade-long ebb of military leverage. Only one service chief remained in his position, General Necdet Özel of the Gendarmerie, who was promptly promoted by Prime Minister Erdoğan to the position of Chief of General Staff.

Between 2002 and 2011, the AKP first increased formal controls over the military, such as limiting the National Security Council, reducing the strength of the military judiciary, and reforming the economic underpinnings of the military. Following the 2007 e-memo and subsequent constitutional crisis, the civilians continued to challenge the military, often directly, as through Ergenekon, Sledgehammer, and changes to the military promotion system. The mass resignation—in large part to protest the changing promotion system that favored civilian input over military seniority—had the

⁴⁵⁷ “Top Military Brass Resign from Posts,” *Hurriyet Daily News*, July 29, 2011. <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/top-military-brass-resign-from-posts.aspx?pageID=438&n=top-military-brass-resign-from-posts-2011-07-29>.

⁴⁵⁸ Aaron Stein, “Explaining Ergenekon: Civil Military Relations in Turkey's Post-Coup Era,” Royal United Services Institute, August 7, 2013.

opposite effect of further handing control of military promotions to the civilians.⁴⁵⁹ A vacancy of the top positions in each branch caused a ripple effect down the chain-of-command, with each new promotion opening a new job. Also, in each promotion, the AKP could (with control of the prime minister's office and president) promote those officers to commands that were amenable to AKP interests. In this way, a mere four resignations can lead to major philosophical realignment within the armed forces' leadership as certain officers are passed over in favor of those the AKP preferred.

Civil-military relations would continue to evolve in Turkey, with each faction coming to terms with the new power relationship. In 2011, assessments that the coup era had ended (and that the era of civilian control was firmly in place) were more likely to be accurate because they were accompanied by constitutional, societal, and political changes that made not just coups less likely, but any military interventions aimed at coercing civilian policies. The generals resigned not because they believed Ergenekon trials would cease, but simply because there was no other course of action. To steal a phrase from Przeworski's *Democracy and the Market*; democratization literature, civilian control exists when all parties accept civilian control as the only game in town. In 2011, the senior military commanders had no remaining options but to operate within the rules of the new civilian-controlled game.⁴⁶⁰

In reality, the military simply came to this conclusion later than the civilians of the AKP who, despite a very recent contentious relationship with the military, did not devote even a single word to the military or to civil-military relations during the 2011 election cycle, having already accepted that the military was no longer an existential threat to civilian governance.⁴⁶¹ For the AKP, it was not necessary to campaign on military reform, because the party had already consolidated control through previous election cycles and coup trials. Instead of focusing the constitutional referendum on

⁴⁵⁹ Soner Çağaptay, "New Military, New Turkey," *Hurriyet Daily News*, July 30, 2011. <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/new-military-new-turkey.aspx?pageID=449&nID=7424&NewsCatID=424>.

⁴⁶⁰ Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America*, Studies in Rationality and Social Change (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

⁴⁶¹ Özpek, "Constitution-Making in Turkey," 161.

curbing military power, the AKP focused on how to extend civilian control over the judiciary while working to avoid undermining the war-fighting capability of the TSK.⁴⁶² So confident had the AKP grown in their control of the TSK (now populated with AKP-friendly generals) that, after years of reductions in military spending by 12% during the previous decade, the first budgets to follow the 2011 elections increased military spending by 7.4 percent, with the Court of Auditors Law from 2011 set to monitor how the military spent the allocated resources for the first time.⁴⁶³ Having established proper roles apart from domestic security such as external defense, the civilians now saw fit to allocate resources to see those missions executed successfully.

As electoral competition predicted, each successive election pushed the AKP to force greater reforms on the military, while crafting policies aimed at increasing voter support for the party in future elections. Over the course of the decade, support for an activist military simply dissolved amongst the populace as leadership changed due to coup trials so too did the political outlook atop the military hierarchy. The CHP campaigned aggressively for early elections in 2007 and in favor of the closure case against the AKP in 2008. By 2011, even the CHP abandoned their support for a political military. While decrying Ergenekon and Sledgehammer investigations, the CHP still recognized that the electorate would no longer tolerate an interventionist TSK.⁴⁶⁴ The 2011 CHP election platform included radical changes to the role of the military, which was a shocking turn of events for a party that was founded in large part by former military officers.⁴⁶⁵ The conversion of the CHP prior to parliamentary elections, combined with the resignations of the generals after the elections, removed any remaining challenges to constitutional changes. These reforms aimed at allowing governments to create a more representative Constitutional Court, and also included more constitutional reforms targeting the power of the military. All the major players in the Turkish civil-military relations dynamic had settled on the same conclusion: The will of

⁴⁶² Ibid., 159.

⁴⁶³ "Turkish Defense and Security Budgets on Rise," *Today's Zaman*, December 16, 2011, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-265946-turkish-defense-and-security-budgets-on-rise.html>

⁴⁶⁴ Gürsoy, "Final Curtain for the Turkish," 205.

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid., 204.

the electorate, in supporting the AKP at the ballot box on six different occasions in a decade, supported placing the TSK firmly under the control of an elected, representative government.

While the narrative of civil-military relations in Turkey was by no means at a conclusion, 2011 was a watershed year in the transfer of actual control of the armed forces from the institution itself to the elected government. After 2011, civil-military relations would continue to find the water line, that point where things rest naturally between the politicians and the generals, but civilian control now consisted of both formal and actual control. What remained to be seen was how coup trials would conclude, and what the AKP would do with their now consolidated control over Turkish government.

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V. CONVICTIONS, CONSOLIDATION, AND CONCLUSIONS

Following the 2011 elections and the resignations of the armed forces chiefs, the AKP civilians maintained legislative policies that aimed to increase both military and civilian politician accountability. Reforms passed since 2002, such as budgetary oversight and National Security Council composition, were implemented and monitored. Also, to increase politician accountability, the Turkish Parliament continued drafting a new constitution to replace the military's 1982 version.

The degree of change during the previous decade was stunning. The AKP went from an outside party elected to a majority—owing in part to a protest against the corruption and incompetence of previous political parties—to a party powerful enough to challenge the secular establishment in a presidential election. It successfully navigated a constitutional crisis as well a closure case before the Constitutional Court after just six short years in office and three election cycles. With the support garnered from successful policies, the AKP accomplished what no other political party had even attempted: a frontal assault on the most organized institution in the country, the Turkish Armed Forces. And, they won. Even the Kemalists of the CHP and other parties acknowledged the new realities of Turkish politics when amending their own electoral platforms in 2011 to demand complete submission of the military to elected civilians.⁴⁶⁶ Not only had electoral competition changed the way the dominant AKP responded to the military, but it also forced opposition parties to alter their own stances in order to remain competitive in elections against the AKP.

Before addressing the findings, this chapter first brings the Ergenekon and Sledgehammer coup trial narratives to a conclusion and, in the process, briefly discusses the expansion of coup trials to include the February 28 Process from 1997, the 1980 coup, and the 1971 “Coups by Memorandum.” Section A recaps the evidence presented in Chapters II through IV, while Section B offers revisits the research hypothesis—that electoral competition allows for increased civilian control over the military by discussing

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid., 199.

the increasing reforms enacted by the civilian AKP following successful elections. Section C presents the findings from this dissertation, while Section D notes possible critiques of this analysis and discusses how criticisms might be reconciled. Lastly, Section E addresses policy implications for this research, as well as future considerations for Turkish civil-military relations moving forward.

While effective civilian control of the Turkish armed forces can be traced to the pivotal events of 2011, the depth and breadth of the coup investigations were such that several cases would not come to a conclusion until 2014, over seven years since their beginning. In addition to the Ergenekon and Sledgehammer coup trials, charges would be brought against military officers who had participated in previous government interventions in 1971, 1980, and 1997, including former Turkish presidents. Because the constitution of 1982 included Temporary Article 15, which granted coup leaders immunity from prosecution for interventions, the AKP had to amend the constitution to allow for the indictment of those perpetrators.⁴⁶⁷ Amending the 1982 constitution allowed for the prosecution of military officers for crimes committed three decades earlier.⁴⁶⁸

From late 2012 forward, Ergenekon and Sledgehammer verdicts rolled in, with over 300 convictions in September 2012. These convictions reached former service chiefs and a current member of parliament, all charged with attempting to destabilize the government and create the foundation for a coup.⁴⁶⁹ In 2013, convictions continued with life sentences for multiple suspects including former Chief of General Staff General İlker Başbuğ, who was charged with supporting an online propaganda campaign against the AKP while serving as the highest military officer.⁴⁷⁰ Of the 275 defendants who were brought to trial for Ergenekon, over 90 percent were convicted for assisting coup plots.

⁴⁶⁷ GNAT, *Constitution of the Republic of Turkey*, Article 15.

⁴⁶⁸ Aknur, "Impact of Civil-Military Relations," 243.

⁴⁶⁹ Suzan Frazer, "326 Convicted in Turkey Military Coup Plot," *Associated Press*, September 21, 2012. <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/verdict-expected-turkish-coup-plot-trial>.

⁴⁷⁰ "Indictment Seeks Aggravated Life Imprisonment for Ex-Military Chief," *Zaman*, February 2, 2012. <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-270330-indictment-seeks-aggravated-life-imprisonment-for-ex-military-chief.html>.

Sledgehammer also had similar conviction rates, with 331 of 365 suspects convicted on charges of coup plotting and fomenting unrest in order to facilitate military interventions.⁴⁷¹ Included in these convictions were 20-year sentences for former Navy and Air Force commanders. The Sledgehammer trials lasted for almost three years and presented over 5,000 pages of documents, including plans to bomb government buildings, mosques, and airliners.⁴⁷²

In January 2012, while Ergenekon and Balyoz were still proceeding, the Ankara 12th High Criminal Court accepted indictments against the 1980 coup leaders. If convicted, generals Kenan Evren and Tahsin Şahinkaya faced life sentences without the possibility of parole.⁴⁷³ On April 4, 2012, with more than 500 co-plaintiffs protesting outside the courtroom, the trial began in Ankara, focused on crimes against the government and the nearly 650,000 people detained during the 1980 coup, 50 of who were executed.⁴⁷⁴ Then, in February 2013, prosecutors arrested nearly a dozen generals and admirals in conjunction with the February 28 Process in 1997. On February 27, 2012, five of the top military commanders during the period were arrested following testimony implicating them in the 1997 plot. Included in the arrests were the army commander and the deputy chief of general staff.⁴⁷⁵ The February 28 investigation also included civilian

⁴⁷¹ “Balyoz File Sent to Court of Appeals for Final Verdict,” *Dünya*, April 25, 2014. <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/balyoz-file-sent-to-court-of-appeals-for-final-verdict.aspx?pageID=238&nid=41991>

⁴⁷² “One More Ex-General Convicted for Feb 28,” *Anatolia News Agency*, February 21, 2013. <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/one-more-ex-general-convicted-for-feb-28.aspx?pageID=238&nid=41619>

⁴⁷³ “1980 Coup Indictment Accepted, Life without Parole Sought for Leaders,” *Today’s Zaman*, January 10, 2012. <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-268151-1980-coup-indictment-accepted-life-without-parole-sought-for-leaders.html>

⁴⁷⁴ “Turkey’s Former Generals Go on Trial for Bloody Sept. 12 Coup,” *Today’s Zaman*, April 4, 2012. <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-276330-turkeys-former-generals-go-on-trial-for-bloody-sept-12-coup.html>

⁴⁷⁵ “Top Commanders of Feb 28 Arrested in Coup Probe,” *Today’s Zaman*, February 27, 2013. <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-308253-top-commanders-of-feb-28-arrested-in-coup-probe.html>

conspirators against the government, such as the former Higher Education Board President Kemal Gürüz.⁴⁷⁶

In addition to government officials, private organizations such as the Women and Democracy Association sought to join suit against the 103 defendants on trial for the February 28 Process, alleging that the coup also prevented the free practice of their democratic rights by restricting political freedoms.⁴⁷⁷ Having successfully won the Ergenekon and Balyoz trials, and having amended the constitution to remove immunity from coup leaders, the evolution of AKP government investigations into coups, from current to former coups decades past, forced Turks to question the entire legacy of their armed forces. If the AKP sought to gain lasting control over the armed forces, the goal had been accomplished; but was jailing former heroes and old men the narrative that the politicians wanted?

In a conciliatory effort, the AKP parliament passed legislation on February 21, 2014, to abolish the special courts created to try military officers who had participated in the 1971, 1980, and/or 1997 interventions. The measure also allowed retrial before civilian courts for the hundreds of officers convicted in the past several years.⁴⁷⁸ This olive branch, offered during a time of significant domestic pressure against Prime Minister Erdoğan, was an effort to prevent further erosion of military prestige. It also sought to bring closure to coup trials that had begun in defense of civilian government six years prior, but had transformed into prosecutions of crimes from previous generations.⁴⁷⁹

⁴⁷⁶ “Court Refuses to Release 74 Suspects from Prison in Feb. 28 Probe,” *Today’s Zaman*, May 16, 2013. <http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail.action;jsessionid=MzbkA+OvcX1X8r6oryceN9k8?newsId=315672&columnistId=0>

⁴⁷⁷ “Turkish PM’s Daughters File Complaint to Become Part of Feb 28 Coup Plot Trial,” *Hurriyet Daily News*, February 20, 2014. <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkish-pms-daughters-file-complaint-to-become-part-of-feb-28-coup-plot-trial.aspx?pageID=238&nID=62752&NewsCatID=338>

⁴⁷⁸ “Turkey Abolishes Special Military Tribunals,” *Agence France Presse*, February 22, 2014. <http://www.arabnews.com/news/529146>

⁴⁷⁹ Günay Hilal Aygün, “AK Party Tries to Bury the Hatchet with the Turkish Army,” *Today’s Zaman*, January 6, 2014. http://www.todayszaman.com/columnists/gunay-hilal-aygun_335894-ak-party-tries-to-bury-the-hatchet-with-turkish-army.html

In 2012, parliament established the Coup and Memorandum Investigation Commission to study the nature and origin of Turkish coups, as well as the potential for future coups. The Commission concluded that, while Turkey was no longer likely to experience a coup d'état thanks to the AKP reforms, it was also impossible to state that another would never take place.⁴⁸⁰ The Commission recommended additional reforms to the Internal Service Law, increased professionalization of the armed forces, clear limits on martial law, and “improvements in democratization” such as a new civil society that would encourage a political culture that opposed military politicization.⁴⁸¹ By targeting improvements to civil society and democracy in general, the commission aimed to further defend society from an interventionist armed forces. The recognition that many military interventions cannot succeed without some degree of support from the population returns us one final time to Hunter’s electoral competition and the notion that, ultimately, the voters decide where to set the boundaries for a politicized military.

A. CHAPTER REVIEW

Chapter I introduced Turkish civil-military relations and identified the problem that this dissertation has sought to answer: How did an inexperienced political party with no significant record of national government manage to succeed where dozens of other political parties failed, in asserting civilian control over a highly politicized Turkish Armed Forces (TSK)? After considering how various civil-military relations theories might be able to explain the change in control, each was unable to account for the particulars of the Turkish case study. The professionalism of the Turkish Armed Forces did not grow during the period from 2002 to 2011, and the civilians have yet to change professional military training and education to reflect an officer corps wholly subject to civilian control. Similarly, the TSK did not suddenly become loyal to the notion of civic-republicanism of Janowitz; rather, the TSK continues to perpetuate their own vision of

⁴⁸⁰ “Politicians Call for More to Be Done to End Coup Tradition,” *Today’s Zaman*, April 26, 2013. <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-313753-politicians-call-for-more-to-be-done-to-end-coup-tradition.html>

⁴⁸¹ Ibid.

what the Republic of Turkey should look like, often in direct contrast to that of the elected politicians.⁴⁸²

The nature of historical Turkish civil-military relations, with four direct displacements of government, countless routine interventions, tutelary control over courts, the media, the MGK, all while maintaining good relations with favored political parties (the Kemalist Republican People's Party or CHP). Combined with large public support, this history also stymied more recent civil-military relations theories such as structural, principle-agent, and concordance. While the high external threat environment helps explain why structural theory informs the AKP decision to maintain a military budget in-line with that of the United Kingdom, Turkey from 2002 to 2011, was not internally secure but externally threatened. Principle-agent theory expects that the military will at least start from the position that civilians have the right to be wrong (which the TSK has never accepted), and concordance only seeks to explain an absence of coups, without regard for who is actually in control of the state. Only electoral competition—with the premise that, given time, civilians will challenge and defeat an activist military by advocating a non-path dependent process—was able to explain the reversal in power between the military and the civilians.

Chapter II helped set the stage for the AKP reforms by detailing the half-century of military interventions that made the civilian success so unexpected. On multiple occasions, the TSK took control of the government, implemented new laws in order to perpetuate military tutelage, and then handed the government back to those civilians the military deemed appropriate, typically former military officers. As recently as 1997, the military displaced an elected government, while the constitutional court banned the party from politics. However, the complete economic and social upheaval of Turkey from 1999 to 2002 bred such voter disgust that the AKP was able to secure an absolute majority of parliamentary seats in 2002, an election whose results stunned elites and bought the party time to craft policies to improve their standing with the voters.

⁴⁸² Cizre, "New Politics of Engagement," 141.

From policies improving the economy, to changes to religious and political freedoms, from 2002 to 2007, the AKP purposefully engaged particularistic (using resources to gain and keep constituents) and particularistic (endorsement of popular public policies) incentives designed to increase their voter appeal and provide protection against military interference.⁴⁸³ Chapter II discussed how these incentives early in the first AKP governments laid the foundation for formal control measures over the military while also meeting voter needs. For both the 2002 national and the 2004 local election, the AKP was the party of choice by a large margin.

Chapter IV demonstrated that, while formal control increased during the first government, it was the national election in 2007 and the events surrounding this election that allowed the AKP to truly subject the military to civilian control. The constitutional crisis generated by the presidential elections of 2007 forced the AKP to call for early elections in the summer. The outcome of the parliamentary elections would decide who filled the office of president, and the opposition CHP had high hopes to cut into the AKP majority. Instead the AKP increased their share of the popular vote, and their candidate Abdullah Gül became president. As a last ditch effort, prosecutors brought a closure case against the AKP, accusing the party of actions against the Republic, by which was meant the public practice of Islam.

When the closure case failed by a single vote, all available surreptitious paths of opposition to the AKP were closed. In response to efforts to destroy the party, the AKP prosecuted hundreds of military officers under the Ergenekon and Balyoz investigations detailed in Chapter IV and previously in this chapter. After only a decade, the AKP had increased formal control through changes in the NSC, the budgeting process, budget oversight, military jurisdiction in the judicial branch and in civil-society, and defeated multiple attempts against the party's agenda. Electoral competition and the forces created by competitive elections explain how this was possible.

⁴⁸³ Hunter, *Eroding Military Influence*, 2.

B. RESEARCH QUESTION AND HYPOTHESIS REVISITED

Despite a long history of scholarly interest in civil-military relations in democracies, the Turkish case managed to receive scant attention in many classical works on the subject, which often focused on the fact that yet another intervention had taken place with a subsequent return to civilian “control.” In *The Third Wave*, Huntington includes the Turkish Armed Forces when discussing “the Praetorian Problem” of rebellious and strong militaries. Despite supposed support for the military, Huntington observes that Turkish voters immediately return civilians to power once the vote is returned—often those same civilians the military previously banned, as the citizens distinguish between supporting stability and supporting military politics.⁴⁸⁴ Also, in *Political Order in Changing Societies*, Huntington addresses the role of the military in the formation of the Turkish government. He notes that playing a major role in the founding of the country influenced the psyche of both the state and the military as Turkey transitioned to multi-party elections.⁴⁸⁵ Similarly, Finer draws attention to the unique character of Kemal Atatürk in commanding legitimacy after a military takeover, where most military officers who lead conspiracies tend to rapidly lose civilian support.⁴⁸⁶

Missing from each of these brief discussions is an in-depth analysis of how the Turkish case relates to the civil-military relations canon. Despite possible inclusion in multiple areas—such as military rule after war, after regime change, or after state transformation—Turkey is often left out, an unfortunate circumstance considering how much information is available on the long history of Turkish civil-military relations.⁴⁸⁷ With nearly a century of historical data, not including previous Ottoman civil-military relations, multiple interventions, constitutions, and transfers of control, Turkey is an ideal case study for the field, because it straddles so many possible research interests. For studies of democracies that suffer coups, authoritarian states transitioning to democracies,

⁴⁸⁴ Huntington, *Third Wave*, 242.

⁴⁸⁵ Huntington, *Political Order in Changing*, 257.

⁴⁸⁶ Finer and Stanley, *Man on Horseback*, 194.

⁴⁸⁷ Barany's, *The Soldier and the Changing State: Building Democratic Armies in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas*, misses Turkey as a subject case for each of these classifications.

and civil-military relations after regime change or after war, any and all would benefit from consideration of the Turkish case, which experienced all of these scenarios. The purpose of this dissertation has been to contribute to the expanding body of literature on Turkish civil-military relations by addressing the question: How did the civilian AK Parti gain and maintain control over the armed forces from 2002 to 2011?

Owing in large part to the very reforms and expansions of civil-society discussed previously, a growing body of literature on Turkish civil-military relations is being produced within Turkish academic circles; some is produced by Turks completing advanced academic degrees abroad, and more by academics inside Turkey. Much has been written about how various interventions came to be, what institutions and laws have perpetuated the military tutelage, what reforms have been enacted under the AKP, and how these reforms affect Turkish civil-military relations. What this dissertation has attempted to explain is what enabled the changes. It is one thing to list reforms and to state what those reforms do; it is another to draw the line between elections, subsequent reforms, and the impact of each on the course of civil-military relations in a complex democracy.

During the previous half-century of government, the Turkish military exercised significant political influence. This power dissolved during the first decade of AKP governance from 2002 to 2011. This research explains the shift in civilian control by employing Wendy Hunter's electoral competition framework. That is, the AKP was able to exert control over the TSK from 2002 to 2011 through repeated electoral and policy successes that enabled emboldened AKP challenges of TSK prerogatives.

From the initial electoral landslide in 2002, through three consecutive parliamentary elections and six opportunities for voters to reject the AKP and their policies, the voters demonstrated consistent and ever-increasing support for the Justice and Development Party. Electoral competition predicts that politicians will make use of programmatic and particularistic incentives to increase their voter support and extend their political lifespan. Particularistic incentives use the resources available to governing parties to sustain and expand the politicians' support networks. Programmatic incentives

are those public policies—such as education, economic reform, and political freedoms—designed to increase voter support.⁴⁸⁸

Together, particularistic and programmatic incentives provide benefits for those who support the party and bring new voters into the party. In the Turkish case, programmatic incentives played a larger role in increasing civilian control of the military than did targeting the military budget to facilitate greater patronage networks. While the AKP did make significant inroads in reforming and monitoring the military budget, these efforts were less about increasing patronage than about decreasing and monitoring the extra-parliamentary sources of funding that allowed the military to operate independent of civilian oversight. AKP reforms of the military budget aimed to increase the survivability of themselves, as well as future governments, by reducing the autonomy of the military in the economic arena.

When wielded, these programmatic and particularistic incentives can lead to challenges from a politically active military, and will lead the civilians to exert greater control over the armed forces. And, as Hunter observes:

If electoral competition unleashes incentives to diminish military influence, the popular support that electoral victory certifies enhances the capacity of politicians to do so. A military organization would incur great risk and cost in taking forceful measures against a government with solid popular backing.⁴⁸⁹

Not only does success at the ballot box provide the civilians the legitimacy to curtail an activist military, the magnitude of that success also correlates to the scope of reforms that politicians can attempt. The electoral competition hypothesis answers the question of how the civilian AKP gained control over the armed forces by asserting that repeated electoral victories allowed increasing challenges of the TSK, an assertion supported in Chapters III and IV.

⁴⁸⁸ Wendy Hunter, “Politicians against Soldiers: Contesting the Military in Postauthorization Brazil,” *Comparative Politics* 27, no. 4 (1995), 429.

⁴⁸⁹ Hunter, “Politicians against Soldiers,” 430.

C. FINDINGS

It has been said that establishing a democracy means institutionalizing and subjecting all interests to uncertainty.⁴⁹⁰ In an authoritarian regime, the military will often have the ability to intervene when uncertainty creates an environment or conflicts that go against their interests.⁴⁹¹ Inasmuch as fair and open elections allow voters to choose their government and avoid authoritarianism, it should be no surprise that these elections also mitigate the ability of the armed forces to intervene when on the losing end of a social conflict. While all elections demonstrate support for parties, platforms, and candidates, the political mandate generated by the results varies according to the type of election. Local elections demonstrate support for parties on local issues, while referendums demonstrate clear political support, or lack thereof, for a specific issue, such as a constitutional rewrite. Voter support for a national government, however, comes from parliamentary elections; the AKP competed in three such elections, in 2002, 2007, and 2011. After each election, the power between the civilian AKP and the Turkish Armed Forces moved demonstrably towards the civilians, eventually reducing the military to mass resignations following the 2011 parliamentary elections.

In 2002, the AKP won 34 percent of the vote and 363 of 550 possible seats in parliament (roughly 66 percent).⁴⁹² While the party's 34 percent was more than triple that of the only opposition party to earn seats in the Grand National Assembly, the 178-seat CHP at 10.7 percent of the popular vote, less than half of all votes cast went for a party that received members of parliament. The election results were an unquestionable landslide wins for the AKP and provided the party with a significant advantage in parliamentary representation. Predominant sentiment amongst voters and experts alike was that the 2002 elections represented less an intentional desire for AKP leadership (the three-year-old party having no national record or accomplishments) than an absolute

⁴⁹⁰ Adam Przeworski, "Some Problems in the Study of the Transition to Democracy," in *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Comparative Perspectives*, ed. Guillermo O'Donnell, Philippe C. Schmitter, and Laurence Whitehead (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 58.

⁴⁹¹ Ibid., 58.

⁴⁹² Aknur, "Impact of Civil-Military Relations," 234

mandate for a change in direction of the government.⁴⁹³ The disastrous 1990s had given the AKP the opportunity to demonstrate that their new political party could provide the leadership and policies that the Turkish voter demanded.

1. 2002 Elections

Following the 2002 elections, the AKP pursued policies designed first and foremost to meet voter expectations—such as economic improvement and increased political freedoms—and thereby increase their political support. The success of these particularistic and programmatic incentives, along with a supportive atmosphere for EU accession and the necessary military reforms to align with the *acquis communautaire* (combined with a comparatively liberal-minded Chief of the General Staff in General Hilmi Özkök), allowed the AKP to also pursue greater formal controls over the TSK than previous political parties could enact. Between 2002 and 2005, the TSK was creating multiple plans to remove the AKP from power while maintaining an outward appearance of toleration for limited military reforms. It is, therefore, likely that the military considered any powers relinquished as temporary losses. Once the public grew dissatisfied with AKP government, the military would simply take back the powers given up during the post-election euphoria. The Balyoz coup plot aimed to increase this dissatisfaction and thus accelerate the TSK return to politics. The Turkish military's miscalculation, assuming that AKP leadership was a temporary condition, proved to be a major mistake. No formal controls enacted following the 2002 elections would be repealed, and the appearance of civilian control became self-sustaining.

Correctly interpreting the election mandate, immediately following the 2002 elections, the AKP began to enact policies demanded by the public in order to demonstrate their desire to constitute a government whose policies would cut across voter affiliation. The Urgent Action Plan sought to combat the widespread corruption that had plagued previous coalition governments, while the Law of Associations and reforms to the Diyanet sought to expand civil society by encompassing a wider variety of organizations. In the process, these measures were benefitting the AKP and increasing

⁴⁹³ Mandacı, "Turkey's Unfinished Transition," 104.

their support network. Perhaps most importantly, the AKP maintained support for IMF reforms in order to help the country recover from the economic collapse that cast a shadow over the 2002 elections. Under AKP economic policies, the Turkish economy made a dramatic turnaround between 2002 and 2006, and it was better prepared to weather the international financial crises later on in the decade.

Each of these policies proved to be popular amongst the voters. They enabled the AKP to enact multiple military reforms that would harmonize Turkey with EU standard practices, while also increasing formal civilian control and decreasing the leverage senior military officers had vis-à-vis politicians. Reforming the military and responding to particularistic incentives, the AKP parliament passed extensive control measures over the TSK budget and its allocation process, including increased oversight of the various institutions created to perpetuate military autonomy. These included the Defense Industry Support Fund, the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey, and the Armed Forces Trust and Pension Fund. Using control of parliament after the 2002 election and the success of these popular policies, the AKP expanded formal controls over the military in a wide variety of areas. It changed the nature of the National Security Council, passed constitutional reforms that reduced the role of the military in civilian advisory boards, and reduced the power of the military judiciary system.

Between 2002 and 2007, AKP-led military reforms began to hem in military independence without leading to open challenges by the military. While busy making plans to oust the AKP, the military was immobilized by the popularity of the AKP and the effectiveness of the government in delivering sound policy. As formal control increased through legislative changes, the AKP was also able to transform the debate about the definition of state security, shifting the focus from political Islam and ethnic divisions to external threats and internal terrorism.⁴⁹⁴ In doing so, the civilians removed the prerogative of the military to determine threats apart from civilian oversight and also removed themselves from the list of potential state threats.

⁴⁹⁴ Müge Aknur, "Impact of Civil-Military Relations," 238.

After the 2002 elections and the first AKP government—considered by some the results of an angry electorate rather than one with a specific intent to put the AKP in power—reform efforts were largely formal, non-threatening, and easily undone (should the military ever displace the AKP with another political party). These reforms increased legal control over the armed forces, but were untested, and also uncontested by the military. Following the 2007 elections, often viewed as a statement against military intimidation of elections, and the conflict surrounding the constitutional crisis and closure case against the AKP, the party’s reform efforts became direct challenges to TSK authority, both legal and moral. The Ergenekon and Balyoz investigations proceeded alongside constitutional reforms to further curtail military prerogatives.⁴⁹⁵

2. 2007 Elections

Precipitated by the collapse of presidential elections and the subsequent constitutional crisis of 2007, parliamentary elections in that year were, from the outset, substantially different from the 2002 elections. Voters knew who the AKP was, what the party’s policy objectives and platforms were, and how the party viewed the office of president (as a vehicle for party policy rather than an apolitical institution). Going into the 2007 elections, voters knew with certainty what would happen regarding the constitution and the office of president if they chose to return the AKP to power: The constitution would be amended to allow direct election of the president, who would have his/her power curtailed in favor of a stronger prime minister as the head of government. Pointedly, the AKP running for re-election in 2007 had made clear that they would seek additional reforms purposefully intended to increase the political power of the AKP by changing the ostensibly apolitical office of president to one filled by popular ballots instead of parliamentary procedures. Thus, while the opposition CHP and the military were stunned by the results, no one could conceivably make the case following the 2007 elections that voters were not making clear decisions on the direction they wanted Turkish politics to go, namely against the military.⁴⁹⁶

⁴⁹⁵ Yildiz, Muller, and Chomsky, *European Union and Turkish*, 150.

⁴⁹⁶ Cagaptay, *Rise of Turkey*, 47.

With outgoing President Sezer warning voters that the secular republic faced its greatest threat since the foundation of the republic in the form of a political party incompatible with the state ideology of Atatürk, and with the full knowledge that an AKP victory would mean an AKP president (a vastly more powerful political party), the Turkish voters increased their support for the AKP from 34 percent to 46 percent. The AKP again formed a non-coalition government, this time with 341 out of 550 parliamentary seats. The party did everything they had promised during the campaign, including the re-nomination of Abdullah Gül to the presidency and constitutional reforms. After surviving a closure case before the Constitutional Court by a single vote, the AKP then dramatically upgraded the size, scope, and aggressiveness of coup investigations against hundreds of senior military officers, both on active duty and retired.

The military had explicitly challenged the AKP leadership and credentials during the presidential elections and the parliamentary election campaign season. By supporting the closure case, however, the AKP (fresh off the largest increase in voter support during elections in half a century) fought back with the full knowledge that, short of actually executing a coup, the military had no counter moves. Military legitimacy had been challenged by the AKP, undermined by the growing coup investigations, and questioned by voters who no longer trusted that the military had the best interests of society in mind. From 2007 to 2011, civil-military relations were a tale of a military and its leadership being indicted by public opinion and legal courts; on the former, the public lost faith in the military as an institution, while the latter indicted leadership for crimes against the government and the people. Any hope that the military had of regaining privileges given away during the first AKP government were lost following the events of 2007 and 2008. This too is as one would expect from electoral competition. A buoyant political party, moving further away from the last transition (1997) and increasing their electoral support at every opportunity, the AKP came to see the military as more than an obstacle, viewing it as an existential threat. The AKP was determined to permanently eradicate that threat.

Constitutional reforms after the 2007 elections removed military roles from multiple civilian institutions, diminished the ability of the military to place officers on the

Constitutional Court, and made it far more difficult for the court to ban political parties or their members. Combined with the now ubiquitous Ergenekon and Balyoz investigations that cast ever-widening nets, the AKP used their support from the 2007 election to gain greater concessions from the military. Any hopes that the voters would turn against the AKP, based on coup trial proceedings, were dashed with the 2009 local elections and the 2010 Constitutional Referendum. While neither would have cost the AKP the government, together they might have indicated a loss of electoral support for the party and the new direction civil-military relations had taken. Even when the coup investigations were at their most acrimonious, voters still turned out in record numbers to voice their support and cast their vote for the politicians and policies of the AKP. Electoral competition had shackled the courses of action available to the military.

3. 2011 Elections

Between 2007 and 2011, the military lost control of all of the institutions, laws, and norms that had allowed influence of political outcomes, even where those institutions directly impacted the readiness of the armed forces. The coup trials destroyed whatever credibility senior military leadership had left after decades of perpetuating a stunted democracy. Despite repeated military warnings that the coup trials were having negative consequences for morale and retention, the voters in 2011 increased their support yet again for the AKP. They did so with the full knowledge that this would mean the coup trials would continue and likely expand to include more suspects, precisely because the coup trials were the foremost issue of the election, with voters having already approved the constitutional referendum in 2010.⁴⁹⁷ By 2011, even the opposition parties had begun to demand more military reform, but the difference between the CHP and the AKP over the continuation of coup trials was a key dividing line between the parties and society. The arrest of journalists who were critical of the due process granted suspects by the government in February and March of 2011 prompted protest internally and abroad, and

⁴⁹⁷ “Tsk’s Entrenched Traditions Become History at Latest Yaş Meeting,” *Zaman*, August 4, 2013. <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-322776-tsks-entrenched-traditions-become-history-at-latest-yas-meeting.html>.

evidenced the clear intent of the AKP to perpetuate the investigations until achieving total submission from the military.⁴⁹⁸

After the 2011 elections and the resignations of the military chiefs, debate on the issue of final authority on the civil-military relations in Turkey was ended. The voters had supported the civilians and their policies through three parliamentary elections, two local elections, and a national referendum to change the constitution and further curtail military privilege. The AKP began to shift the focus from gaining control of the armed forces to consolidating that control, a shift that was possible when the AKP populated senior military positions with individuals who tolerated—though they did not overtly support—civilian control and an apolitical military. Nil Satana refers to this final consolidation as demanding the military elites' recognition that society and government have agreed that democratic control of the armed forces is the preferred condition, and a matching behavioral shift from the military is the next logical step.⁴⁹⁹ As organizational attitude flows from leadership, by putting officers into positions of leadership that were more amenable to civilian control, the politicians aimed to encourage such a behavioral shift.

In many cases, consolidation of control meant applying the formal controls passed years earlier, as in early 2012 when the Turkish Court of Accounts initiated an audit of military expenditures, the first in history.⁵⁰⁰ Additional measures of civilian control included the 2012 parliamentary passage of regulations allowing the publication of audit reports of the military to give the public greater openness.⁵⁰¹ In 2013, the AKP finally succeeded in amending the Turkish Armed Forces Internal Service Law, which, as described in Chapter II, directly enabled military tutelage by giving the military the legal duty to protect the country from internal threats, often through coups. The amended

⁴⁹⁸ Gürsoy, "Final Curtain for the Turkish," 195.

⁴⁹⁹ Nil S. Şatana, "Transformation of the Turkish Military and the Path to Democracy," *Armed Forces & Society* 34, no. 3 (2008), 380.

⁵⁰⁰ "Court of Accounts to Finally Audit Military Expenditures, a First in History," *Zaman*, February 1, 2012, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-270198-court-of-accounts-to-finally-audit-military-expenditures-a-first-in-history.html>.

⁵⁰¹ Aknur, "Civil-Military Relations During the AK Party Era," 143.

version makes it clear that the TSK role is national defense from external threats, emphasizing external over internal roles and responsibilities.⁵⁰²

D. CRITIQUES AND CHALLENGES TO THE FINDINGS

The evidence presented herein argues strongly for the effects of electoral competition and election results in influencing the course of civil-military relations after transitions to civilian rule. It is also important, however, to consider possible challenges or objections to these findings. While some may argue that other theories could explain the change in control under the AKP, those theories could not address the question: Why now? Turkey has had multi-party elections since 1946. If electoral competition claims that elections will drive civilian control, why did it take half a century to come to fruition? In addition to this challenge, one might argue that the specific set of international and domestic pressures present during the 2000s played a greater role than election results. Finally, assuming each of these can be successfully defended, a final protest against the arguments in this dissertation might be that if the electoral competition logic is in play, then we should observe greater reductions in the military budget than actually took place under the AKP, because budget reductions were a key component in the Brazilian case as analyzed by Hunter. Each of these potential challenges merits a response, none of which, however, undermine the conclusion that electoral competition explains the increase in civilian control under the AKP from 2002 to 2011.

If competitive elections drive inexorably towards civilian control over the military, why did elections in Turkey not facilitate this transfer of power sooner than 2002? Perhaps more powerfully, though active under the Ottoman Empire, the modern Turkish Armed Forces remained largely out of politics until the advent of multi-party elections. Does that mean that electoral competition triggered the political interventions? Of these questions, the latter is swiftly deflected with consideration of the circumstances surrounding both the beginning of multi-party elections and the 1960 coup. As Chapter II examined, the TSK has been consistent in their position that the Republic of Turkey, as established by Atatürk, was entrusted to the armed forces. One position the TSK

⁵⁰² Ibid.

stridently upheld was the severe *laïcité* implemented at the founding of the republic, and a reason for military suspicion of Islamist parties and politicians.⁵⁰³

Under single-party rule of the Kemalist CHP from 1923 to 1946, however, there would be no reason for an active military. On the contrary, it was the authoritarianism of the non-Kemalist Demokrat Parti that prompted the 1960 military coup and a new constitution favoring a politicized military.⁵⁰⁴ According to Hunter, the mere appearance of infringement on military interests (of which national stability and Kemalism are essential components) will prompt military interference in politics unless there is actual civilian control.⁵⁰⁵ It is important to note that Stepan points out that situations can exist where low conflict between the military and civilians takes place alongside high military prerogatives.⁵⁰⁶ This condition occurs because the power asymmetry between the civilians and the military is such that civilians simply accommodate themselves to the military prerogatives.⁵⁰⁷ This scenario is reflective of Turkey in between interventions, such as in the early 1990s when observers convinced themselves that Turkey had developed past the point of military tutelage, and from 1923 and 1956 when the Kemalist CHP governed under single party rule. The scenario, however, is not reflective of the AKP governments, who never accommodated themselves to military prerogatives, instead constantly chipping away at them. That being said, multi-party elections did not trigger an activist military; the Turkish Armed Forces is not opposed to civilian government in principle, but in practice. While the armed forces have considered Islamist parties a threat, parties from across the political spectrum have been banned for crossing paths with the military over Kemalism and the strict adherence to those principles in

⁵⁰³ M. Sukru Hanioglu, *rk: An Intellectual Biography* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011), 231.

⁵⁰⁴ Like coups themselves, Turkish constitutions have a long history of failure and revision. As far back as 1927, Toynbee observed, "It has taken several experiments in Turkey to gain even a semblance of a practical constitution based on popular will and administration." Nearly 90 years later, and with two additional constitutions written after his comments, the analysis remains accurate. Arnold Toynbee and Kenneth P. Kirkwood, *Turkey* (New York: Scribner's, 1927), 195.

⁵⁰⁵ Hunter, "Contradictions of Civilian Control," 634.

⁵⁰⁶ Alfred Stepan, *Rethinking Military Politics: Brazil and the Southern Cone* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988), 98.

⁵⁰⁷ Ibid.

government.⁵⁰⁸ In each case, the primacy of security issues as interpreted by the TSK led to party closures.⁵⁰⁹

If multi-party elections did not, in and of themselves, cause the military interventions, what prevented the consolidation of civilian control over the military for so long? The answer is that, despite the fact that the initial conditions and constraints following a transition from military junta to electoral democracy does not create permanent limits on the democracy and civilian control, electoral competition predicts growing civilian control the further countries move from a transition.⁵¹⁰ That the Turkish politicians entered office with a firm awareness of power-relationship between the military and the civilians also demonstrates the importance of political awareness in pushing for greater civilian control.

The powers of electoral competition take place over time, as political parties that do not face reelection (because they are disbanded) cannot effectively wield the programmatic and particularistic incentives necessary to increase their political support and challenge military privilege.⁵¹¹ Each instance of a military evicting an elected government should be considered a form of transition. Despite the fact that in 1971 and 1997 the Turkish military did not physically take the reins of government, they did effect a transition—from a government elected by the voters to one operating with the approval of the military. And, as discussed in Chapter II, each military intervention in 1960, 1971, 1980, and 1997 also added additional military privileges and adjusted the laws and institutions that set the boundaries of Turkish politics.

⁵⁰⁸ Since the creation of the modern Republic in 1923, dozens of political parties have been banned in Turkey from a wide variety of political ideologies. The religious Progressive Republican Party was banned as early as 1925. After military interventions, political parties at odds with the military are frequently targeted. Following the 1971 “coup by memorandum,” the leftist Workers Party of Turkey was banned, as was the religious National Order Party. Since 1993, multiple Kurdish political parties have been banned, the most recent in 2009 being the Democratic Society Party. Underrepresented on the banned list are parties who share the military vision for Turkish politics.

⁵⁰⁹ F. Stephen Larrabee, and Ian O. Lesser, *Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2003), 29.

⁵¹⁰ Hunter, “Continuity of Change?” 474.

⁵¹¹ Hunter, “Politicians against Soldiers,” 425.

From the first multi-party elections in 1946, until 2011 and the mass military resignations, the most consecutive elections to take place without an intervention, and therefore transition, were the four between 1980 and 1997. Four election cycles, however, is one more than the AKP enjoyed between 2002 and 2011. If electoral competition explains changing civilian control, where was the change from 1980 to 1997? Civilians were unable to force military reform between 1980 and 1997 for several reasons. The first reason was that the 1980 coup leader Kenan Evren assumed the presidency from 1980 to 1989, thereby insuring that final authority for laws executed rested with the military despite the appearance of civilian leadership. The second reason is that only during the 1983 and 1987 elections did a single party, the Motherland Party in each case, earn enough votes to form a government without a coalition. This is important because, as Hunter makes clear regarding the Brazilian case, legislatures suffer from a collective action problem, the desire to pursue patronage can prevent representatives from working together against military authority.⁵¹² This feature is even more pronounced in a parliamentary system where even the Prime Minister is governed alongside his party as opposed to a president who is directly elected and accountable only to voters.

The collective action problem made it even easier for coup leader Kenan Evren president to check the unified government throughout the tenure of each, opposition parties could benefit from Motherland being rendered powerless. With a new constitution, new legal institutions protecting the military tutelage, and a military general as president, the enormity of the military transition was too much to overcome. As the elections continued and civilians could have garnered the public support necessary to challenge the military, the vote fractured. Throughout the 1990s, no political party could demonstrate major political support.

Only in 2002 did another political party receive enough votes to form a single-party government. And, as the coup trials would prove, while the military was accommodating of formal changes to civil-military relations, the TSK was also crafting and refining plans to unseat the AKP. During this period, however, the AKP worked

⁵¹² Wendy Hunter, *Eroding Military Influence in Brazil: Politicians against Soldiers* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 98.

furiously to wield the programmatic and particularistic incentives necessary to earn an electoral mandate sufficient to deter military intervention. Without a clear voter mandate in support of the AKP rather than against other parties in 2002, the military and secularist allies did challenge the AKP—through coup plans and by preventing a presidential election. The deadlock was broken only after the 2007 elections, wherein the Kemalist CHP expected to challenge the AKP for government, but instead voter support for the AKP actually increased by 12 percent. It was this second election that subdued the military via the clear mandate for the AKP policies and presidential nominee, in conjunction with the previously increased formal control mechanisms.

The second potential challenge to the evidence presented in this document, that the increase in formal control was due to the unique combination of domestic and international pressures rather than electoral competition, is essentially an argument in favor of a structural analysis. That the domestic unrest of the 1990s contributed to the AKP election is generally accepted, and argued previously in Chapter III. That the combination of a moderate as the Chief of General Staff and a national attitude of excitement over EU accession from 2002 to 2005 afforded the AKP a brief window to govern without an overtly excessive military opposition is similarly acknowledged and accepted. However, while these conditions enabled an increase in formal (legal) control during the early AKP administration, none of these factors was present during the open contestation during 2007 and 2008. While I have argued that the waning EU interest and waxing nationalism contributed to a more active military, they did not similarly contribute to an atmosphere that allowed a successful military challenge. As a historical fact, the challenge to the party from a resurgent TSK during this period was put down at the ballot box. Therefore, to claim that the removal of the EU and a friendly Chief of General Staff was causal in a more active military is true, but does nothing to refute the point that this more hostile TSK was defeated by electoral forces, specifically, a very clear mandate from the voters that AKP changes to the office of president were supported.

A final charge that might be leveled against this research is that not enough emphasis was given to the use of the military budget as a weapon against the TSK. This

dissertation treated the AKP challenge of the TSK budget in a fashion mirroring the civilian politicians themselves, as part of a multi-faceted program of incentives, all of which featured degrees of challenge to military autonomy whose intent was to ensure re-election of the party. Indeed had the AKP attempted to reduce TSK budget authority between 2002–2006 without explaining the move as necessary for fiscal stability and economic recovery, it is highly likely the TSK would have rejected the reductions. However, reductions in average spending as a percentage of GDP dropped from 3.2 percent during the period of 2000–2004 to 2.0 percent from 2005–2009 demonstrate the AKP willingness to use the budget to increase civilian control over the TSK.⁵¹³ Over the AKP decade from 2002–2011 military expenditures were in reduced by 12% while average global military expenditures increased by 4.5% annually. Meanwhile, military cuts were diverted to education and national health care, providing even greater services for the voter, even as per-capita income tripled.⁵¹⁴

Chapter III illustrated the lengths to which the AKP went to increase oversight of the military budget, including the cancellation of multiple military platforms, 20 percent reductions to military budget between 2002 and 2006, and multiple changes to the budgeting process and transparency. There are two important considerations for discussing the magnitude of politician challenges to the military budget. First, for the AKP the purpose of military reform was to demonstrate governance, increase oversight, and increase voter approval for the party. This the AKP did in reducing budget allocation both in real expenditures and as a percentage of GDP, by establishing civilian control over weapons procurements, and by increasing transparency of the budgetary process. Without eviscerating the military budget, the AKP managed significant reductions at a time when average national military spending was increasing globally. Thus, in both absolute and relative to other states, the AKP politicians made major reforms to TSK spending.

⁵¹³ NATO, "Financial and Economic Data Relating to Nato Defence," ed. Public Diplomacy Division (Brussels, Belgium: NATO, 2014), 6.

⁵¹⁴ "Turkey Slashes Military Spending, Steers Funds to Social Programs," *Sabah* April 2012. <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/business/2012/04/turkeys-military-spending-down-1.html#>.

Recent military failures by the TSK—such as an accidental explosion at an ammunition depot in Afyon that killed twenty-five soldiers in 2012, the Turkish fighter jet shot down by the Syrian military in 2012, and inability of the TSK to defeat the PKK—has triggered severe public criticism of TSK capabilities.⁵¹⁵ David Mares describes democratic control of the military as sustained by two bargains: one between civilian sectors and one between the civilians and the military.⁵¹⁶ The agreement between the civilians and the armed forces requires a degree of autonomy and resources necessary to accomplish the military mission.⁵¹⁷ Having removed politics as a mission, the AKP still budgeted for the other military roles in order to uphold their end of the implicit agreement and ensure the effectiveness of the military.

As a major NATO military—bordering the Middle East and Russia, pivotal to combating international terrorism, promoting democracy in Islamic countries, and deterring a resurgent Russia—the Turkish military must be able to defend daily against the threat of major regional war. Turkish security concerns necessitate a controlled and combat-effective institution; budget reductions that advance the former at the expense of the latter are not sound policy when politicians consider the threat environment.⁵¹⁸ The aforementioned outrage at recent failures of the TSK demonstrates the public's expectations that their military be effective in carrying out the national defense.

A final distinction should be drawn between electoral competitions as applied to South American case studies and Turkey regarding the cutting military budgets. The reduction of armed forces budgets was the method of civilian challenge of military autonomy, rather than the purpose. Hunter makes clear that going after the military budgets in Brazil was a decision based on the unique political culture of the country. As described by Hunter, the exceptionally clientelistic nature of the Brazilian voter

⁵¹⁵ Cagaptay, *Rise of Turkey*, 52.

⁵¹⁶ David R. Mares, "Latin American Economic Integration and Democratic Control of the Military: Is There a Symbiotic Relationship?" in *Civil-Military Relations in Latin America: New Analytical Perspectives*, ed. David Pion-Berlin (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 226.

⁵¹⁷ Ibid.

⁵¹⁸ Thus, while this research did not find that structural conditions led to increased civilian control of the Turkish armed forces, they did play a role in the extent to which the AKP was willing to go when crafting defense budgets.

demanding a source of assets to distribute because political parties base their appeal “more on patronage than on programs.”⁵¹⁹ In Turkey, however, voters consistently rank the economy, jobs, and security as the most important items, by a margin of almost 10–1 over poverty and social programs.⁵²⁰ Reducing military autonomy, therefore, comes not merely from reducing the amount the military spends, but rather the manner in which the allocated money is spent, and the AKP accomplished both. The Turkish case shows that the patronage “generates strong pressures against the continued entrenchment of the military in the political and economic fabric of the country” can be accomplished without reducing military spending to levels that reduce the ability of the military to carry out their (now newly assigned by the civilian) roles and responsibilities.⁵²¹

Electoral competition rests on the premise that wielding incentives allows politicians to exert control over the military. Particularistic incentives concern the distribution of public resources to gain and keep constituents, and the AKP engaged in multiple efforts to create a lasting electoral base by allocating resources to areas that would increase political support, such as increasing spending on education, religious instruction, and economic growth as detailed in Chapter III.⁵²² Programmatic incentives create or endorse public policies popular among the electorate. These incentives, alongside a strong commitment to IMF reforms, despite the resistance to such policies by the AKP base, helped increase voter support for the AKP, and the increasing share of the popular vote at successive elections demonstrated the wisdom of this approach.⁵²³ The enthusiasm for the party was brought about by policies that reduced poverty and facilitated economic growth, social stability, and greater national confidence.⁵²⁴

In concluding this research we have come nearly full circle, back to Samuel Huntington and his conceptions of objective and subjective control. Not satisfied with

⁵¹⁹ Hunter, “Politicians against Soldiers,” 430.

⁵²⁰ International Republican Institute Interactive, “International Republican Institute: Turkish Public Opinion Survey.” 38.

⁵²¹ Hunter, *Eroding Military Influence*, 10.

⁵²² *Ibid.*, 2.

⁵²³ *Ibid.*

⁵²⁴ Hunter, “Continuity or Change?” 462.

what was meant by “civilian control,” Huntington offered that subjective control meant maximizing civilian power relative to that of the military.⁵²⁵ Of the three forms of subjective control listed, control by government institution, by social class, and by constitutional form, the latter has been the method by which the AKP asserted control over the TSK. There are two major limitations to this type of control, the first of which has historically been a serious problem for Turkey, namely that “In a democratic country the military may undermine civilian control and acquire great political power through the legitimate processes and institutions of democratic government and politics.”⁵²⁶ Throughout this dissertation I have referred to the increase in relative power between the military as “civilian control,” as opposed to “democratic civilian control,” which would include such trappings as institutional control mechanisms, oversight, and professional norms.⁵²⁷

While I have shown that AKP reforms have constitutional control mechanisms, the ministry of defense remains weak, with the TSK answering directly to the Prime Minister. Similarly, parliament still has limited oversight and control over all the TSK revenue sources. Thus, while the civilians have gained increased control over some senior leadership promotions, and expanded control of the NSC, there is still a need for greater institutional control. Democratic civilian control also implies oversight of the military from a variety of sources outside the government including an independent media and nongovernmental organizations.⁵²⁸ Though the AKP has increased freedoms of association, outside international organizations such as SIPRI and NATO, nongovernmental oversight of the TSK remains minimal. Finally, professional norms within the TSK are still controlled by the military. Education, training, and indoctrination all remain under the purview of the military. Thus, while civilian control has demonstrably improved through the mechanisms of electoral competition, Turkey has a

⁵²⁵ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1957; repr., 1985). 80.

⁵²⁶ *Ibid.*, 82.

⁵²⁷ Thomas C. Bruneau, *Patriots for Profit : Contractors and the Military in U.S. National Security* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2011). 36.

⁵²⁸ *Ibid.*

journey before full democratic civilian control is established, and this journey will be an important area for future students of civil-military relations and Turkish politics to monitor.

E. DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

If democratic civilian control of the armed forces is a process, then Turkey remains a work in progress. The current and future trajectory of Turkish civil-military relations and democratic civilian control bear watching, with implications for Turks as well as regional neighbors and scholars. Will the elected politicians continue to expand institutional control mechanisms, knowing that doing so weakens military loyalty to the political party in power? Can a bipartisan parliament increase oversight of budget allocations, professional military education, and all the while maintaining warfighting effectiveness? Each of these questions bears consideration, and will require further research in the short future. This is even more so because, as the AKP accelerated civilian control of the military, the rest of the Middle East and North Africa began to pay attention. Other Muslim countries with electoral systems of government began to increase relations and commission studies of the advances in Turkish civil-military relations such as the PILDAT papers published by Pakistan in 2009.⁵²⁹

With the onset of the Arab Spring in 2011, outside interest in Turkey soared. While the Western world attempted to market Turkey as an ideal democracy with open elections and (by 2011) near complete civilian control of the military, others looked to Turkey for different reasons.⁵³⁰ Shortly after Egyptians forced Hosni Mubarak out of office, attention turned to the military and discussion as to whether the Egyptian military would countenance an avowed Islamist government or use the opportunity to impose a

⁵²⁹ The Pakistan Parliamentary Defence Committee Delegation Visit Study Visit to Turkey details Pakistan's intensive intergovernmental sessions with their peers in Turkish ministries as the Pakistani's attempted to determine if Turkey represented a "model" that other countries might follow. Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency (PILDAT), *Pakistan Parliamentary Defence Committee Delegation Study Visit to Turkey* (Pakistan: Author, 2009).

⁵³⁰ Robin Wright, ed. *The Islamists Are Coming: Who They Really Are* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center, 2012), 2.

managed democracy without losing popularity.⁵³¹ Concurrent to these discussions were the discovery that Egypt had requested translations of Turkish constitutions, and that they might model Egypt's new constitution on the Turkish version, the supposed model. The question that went unanswered was: Who requested the Turkish constitution? Was it the civilians, who saw recent reforms as a means to prevent the military from taking over the government? Or, was it the military, which recognized the Turkish constitution as the means by which the military established tutelary oversight of the civilian politicians for decades? Unlike China, Iran, and Russia, however, Turkey has not actively represented itself as a model for neighboring states, preferring instead to encourage those states to respect human rights and democracy, and to respect their citizens as Abdullah Gül recommended Arab states do when speaking at the Organization of the Islamic Conference.⁵³²

Externally, Turkey was held up as a model for the former authoritarian states of Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya. Internally, however, the political debate before and following the 2011 elections began to turn around a different notion: Had the government taken a turn towards authoritarianism itself? ⁵³³ Observers cited flaws in the Ergenekon investigations, the jailing of journalists in conjunction with the investigations, and the growing tendency of the AKP to utilize the coup trials as a pretense for actions that would otherwise be termed authoritarian.⁵³⁴ As early as 2010, at the height of coup investigations, constitutional referenda, and in preparation for 2011 elections, Turkish experts began to question whether the AKP would actually take the country down the pluralist path more common in Western democracies or instead maneuver to establish themselves as a permanent governing party.⁵³⁵ The strong centralization of Turkish government means that a popular prime minister can wield extensive political powers. In

⁵³¹ Abdullah Gül, "Speech by President Abdullah Gül at the Oic" (paper presented at the Organization of Islamic Countries, Malaysia, 2012).

⁵³² Kemal Kirişci, "Democracy Diffusion: The Turkish Experience," in *Turkey and Its Neighbors: Foreign Relations in Transition* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2012), 156.

⁵³³ Gareth Jenkins, "Beyond Memory and Imagination: Civil-Military Relations and Turkey's New Authoritarianism," *Silk Road Studies* 4, no. 15 (2011), 2.

⁵³⁴ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁵³⁵ Michael Thumann, "Turkey's Role Reversals," *The Wilson Quarterly* 34, no. 3 (2010), 33.

past decades, Islamic parties bemoaned the centralization of power; once in office, however, the AKP proved more than willing to use the powers of government to clamp down on opposition media, political opponents, and protesters.⁵³⁶ For many Turks, the Gezi Park protests of 2013 demonstrated what others pointed out years before: the extreme centralization of Turkish political power almost rewards authoritarian tendencies.⁵³⁷ Those who turned out to protest loudly bemoaned the lack of representation in government for views different than the majority AKP, and the government backlash against these protests was severe.⁵³⁸

While potential growing authoritarianism by the elected politicians is dangerous, in the Turkish case, the voters have (and will have) had the opportunity to turn out the AKP on several occasions and have failed to do so. This dynamic is likely to continue because Turkish voters also believe that politician personality and whether or not the politician is from the party in power are important considerations for casting votes.⁵³⁹ Ironically, the only previous political party to win three consecutive electoral wins was the Democrat Party of the 1950s, which also became the first political party ousted by the military for, of all things, authoritarianism. This is not to say that Turks in 2014 will tolerate the arrest and execution of the elected prime minister by the military. It does, however, demonstrate a hazard in electoral competition: When a party has been in power long enough, the inherent self-interest that motivates politicians to challenge the military can also lead them to stifle the media, average citizens, or any voices of dissent. As the 2015 Turkish parliamentary elections approach, some believe Turkey to be on a path towards a dominant party model, with the AKP having maneuvered state institutions and bureaucracies to effectively become extensions of the executive branch.⁵⁴⁰ If such a scenario does in fact become reality, Turkey would much more resemble those states in

⁵³⁶ Ibid.

⁵³⁷ Nilüfer Göle, "Gezi: Anatomy of a Public Square Movement," *Insight Turkey* 15, no. 3 (2013), 9.

⁵³⁸ Coşkun Taştan, "The Gezi Park Protests in Turkey: A Qualitative Field Research," *Insight Turkey* 15, no. 3 (2013), 29.

⁵³⁹ Interactive, "International Republican Institute: Turkish Public Opinion Survey." 17.

⁵⁴⁰ Esen and Ciddi, "Turkey's 2011 Elections," 13.

the Middle East and North Africa who looked to Turkey as a model, than the states of Europe whom Turkey has traditionally aspired to mirror.

Despite the initial interest in the “Turkey as a model for the Middle East” narrative, the story never played out. On the Turkish side, the politicians did not want to be viewed as a model for their neighbors, instead aspiring to what Turkish politicians have considered even greater heights, such as in the unsuccessful attempt with Brazil to broker nuclear deals with Iran.⁵⁴¹ Apart from the lack of Turkish interest in cultivating states molded in its image, the Turkish experience was also simply too unique to be transferred to other countries by simple constitutional mandate. As Chapter II showed, the eventual tutelary nature of Turkish civil-military relations was a half-century process of attempting to create a Kemalist state as envisioned by military and elites—rather than what the protestors of the Arab Spring wanted: a state dedicated to protecting and promoting the welfare of the citizens.

Though Turkey does not translate well as a model for neighboring states, it serves unquestionably well as a case study for the Middle East and other regions of the world still attempting to consolidate civilian control over the military. If electoral competition can break the imbalance between the military and the civilians in Turkey, then it can likely lead to similar outcomes in other hard cases. Despite the historical legacy, the civilian AKP was able to gain unprecedented control over the military in only a few short election cycles. While the Turkish case is exceptional in that the level of entrenchment was so severe and public support for the military consistently high, the outcome does not need to be exceptional, nor is it likely to be in future cases.

What then can American and other Western policymakers do to truly improve civil-military relations in Egypt, Pakistan, and other notional democracies that struggle with military interventions? The research herein has indicated that, given enough time, if elections are in fact free and open, the force of electoral competition will meliorate the activist military. However, the essential component that is often unavailable (as it was for decades in the Turkish case) *is* enough time. When politically active militaries interfere

⁵⁴¹ Alexei Barrionuevo and Sebnem Arsu, “Brazil and Turkey near Nuclear Deal with Iran,” *New York Times*, May 16, 2010, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/17/world/middleeast/17iran.html?_r=0.

with elections in a manner that inhibits electoral competition, such as banning political parties in Turkey, external actors might be able to provide the necessary support structure to give electoral competition time to take root. In the Turkish case, the influence of the EU accession process assisted in granting the civilian AKP enough time to demonstrate effective governance on areas such as political freedoms, religion, and most importantly, economics.

Western states aware of these dynamics could craft policies designed to keep interventionist militaries from interfering with politics, therefore allowing political parties and politicians the time they need to actually legislate those programmatic and particularistic incentives that increase their political lifespan. Consider, for example, Egypt after the 2011 Arab Spring. Had the United States immediately tied military assistance to the Egyptian Army to avoiding political intervention—to include direct subsidies, foreign military sales, and planned joint exercises to the Egyptian militaries steering clear of the national elections (as well as demanding a policy of non-intervention by the Egyptian military in following the election)—then perhaps the Egyptian politicians would have had time to craft and implement the policies electoral competition predicts.

The three primary areas that might use this research as a springboard are the continuing democratization of Turkey, the potential influence of electoral competition on those countries of the Arab Spring, and the effectiveness of the TSK going forward. As previously touched upon, the tendency towards a single-dominant party system in Turkish politics, with potentially authoritarian tendencies, hazards outpacing pluralism and putting the gains of the last decade at risk. While the material presented herein can explain how the civilians were to overcome the activist TSK, it makes no attempts to claim that such consolidation leads inevitably to a pluralistic democracy, or democratic civilian control, merely one in which the civilians have exerted control over the armed forces. Will Erdoğan stand aside in 2015 as party rules dictate? Or will he make a move for the presidency at the end of Abdullah Gül's term? That one decision will have a major impact on which trajectory Turkish politics will travel. The former could open the door to a more pluralistic system with the exodus of the immensely popular and successful Erdoğan from the scene, while the latter could further stunt continuing democratization

efforts. Erdoğan will have to decide whether to follow the George Washington model, and leave on top, or the Vladimir Putin model, forever claiming that the good of the country necessitates his own leadership.

The Arab Spring represents possibly the best opportunity to expand future research on electoral competition in the immediate future. If the theory is to provide general accuracy, then these cases are important to follow. While the South American states enjoyed structural advantages, such as low external threats, and Turkey NATO membership and many trappings of western European nations, including a strong centralized government, global economy, and democratic history, the Arab Spring states have none of these advantages. While in the Turkish case these structural conditions did not determine the evolution of civilian control, they most certainly inform and influence political decision-making. Regardless, electoral competition expects that even these states will see consolidation of the military by civilians given enough time and open elections. While in the Turkish case these structural conditions did not determine the evolution of civilian control, they most certainly inform and influence political decision-making.

Civilian control can be established by strengthening the formal control mechanisms or by decreasing the relative power of the military or both. In Turkey, both took place, with both the civilians increasing formal control and diminishing Turkish autonomy. The hazard of the former is the impact on effectiveness. While AKP has directed the military towards external security roles, the question of effectiveness has not yet been resolved. Roles such as waging war, anti-terrorism campaigns, humanitarian assistance, and border security are all measures of effectiveness.⁵⁴² As more data are compiled on the ability of the TSK to perform these roles, it will be important to analyze whether the reduced autonomy, changes to promotion systems, and loss of faith in the military by the citizens will negatively impact mission effectiveness.

What should be clear from this research is that constructing civilian control over the armed forces is first and foremost an internal exercise. External factors such as threat environment and foreign influence can help or hinder the process of reform, but not

⁵⁴² Bruneau, *Patriots for Profit*, 34.

generate reform ex nihilo.⁵⁴³ While judicial branch agents, bureaucrats, and other state actors can influence processes, only elected officials are the only actors tasked by the voters to wield the programmatic and particularistic incentives occurring naturally in democratic states necessary to force reforms on a politically active military. What a party such as the AKP does with that power once the military is subdued is an altogether different matter, yet that too the voters will decide, accepting the possible emerging single-party dominance or elevating another party to challenge the decade-plus superiority of Justice and Development.

⁵⁴³ Jan Teorell, *Determinants of Democratization: Explaining Regime Change in the World, 1972–2006* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 138.

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